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**DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD:  
CORRESPONDENCE AND SELECT DOCUMENTS**



DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD

# DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD: CORRESPONDENCE AND SELECT DOCUMENTS

Volume Two  
(1938)

Edited by  
VALMIKI CHOUDHARY



ALLIED PUBLISHERS PRIVATE LIMITED  
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## PREFACE

This volume, second in a series, includes letters written by and to Dr. Rajendra Prasad during the year 1938, and other documents of the period.

The year 1938 was a year of momentous events in the history of India's freedom struggle. The Congress fought the elections the year before and formed Ministries in a majority of the Provinces. The functioning of these Ministries evoked keen interest both in the country and outside.

As for the leadership of the time, Mahatma Gandhi was already striding the Indian scene like a colossus, influencing and shaping the course of the movement with his unquestioned moral authority. As a dynamic leader, Jawaharlal Nehru insisted on providing an economic dimension to the freedom struggle, and thus won the hearts of all the people. Vallabhbhai Patel, Subhas Chandra Bose, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, C. Rajagopalachari, Govind Ballabh Pant, and J.B. Kripalani were among the many stalwarts on the national scene.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad was devoting his undivided attention to the organisational and parliamentary matters, in his capacity as a member of the Parliamentary Committee of the Congress. He shared this honour with Sardar Patel and Maulana Azad. Subhas Chandra Bose was the President of the Congress at the time.

When the Congress Ministries were in power there arose the question of the relationship that should exist between the ministries and the party. Rajendra Babu from his pivotal position in the organisation provided the much required support and guidance to the Congress Ministries. The letter he wrote to the Premiers of the Provinces (dated 4 March 1938) on the various legislative and administrative measures that should be urgently taken by the Congress Ministries is verily a blueprint of a scheme encompassing the whole gambit of governmental activities. It spoke of matters ranging from agrarian reforms, education, the need for eradication of corruption, measures of succour to the oppressed and the downtrodden, industrial development, jail reforms, to conservation of forest wealth, etc., etc. No exaggeration, even in the context of contemporary India.

Rajendra Babu had a very clear conception of the role of the opposition in a democratic set-up and parliamentary form of government. His letter (dated 11 October 1938) to Vallabhbhai Patel is a testimony to the candid manner in which he took to task even his own organisation when he felt it was straying from the path of democracy. The norms of correct political behaviour he had recommended hold good for all times.

The picture that emerges from these letters is that of a man who dedicated

himself to the service of the nation in spite of personal hardships. His frequent spells of illness led several of his colleagues and friends to insist that he should mind his health. But that was one advice Rajendra Babu never took seriously.

The arrangement of documents in this volume follows the pattern of the preceding volume: 'Correspondence—Part I' includes letters written by or written to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, while 'Correspondence—Part II' contains letters exchanged between others, copies of which were sent to him for information, advice and action. Other miscellaneous documents, including the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the wages and conditions of labour in Kanpur, form the Appendices.

VALMIKI CHOUDHARY

Chandmari Road  
Patna-20  
August 15, 1984

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# CORRESPONDENCE

## PART I

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SIST HINDI RASHTRIYA MAHASABHA, HARIPURA

Vitthalnagar  
Congress Camp  
10 January 1938

My dear Rajen Babu,

I have not heard from you since you left Bombay. Pantji and Katju had wired to me from Lucknow about Sir Govind Rao and I had inquired from him and informed them through Mr. Munshi that he would come if they wanted him badly.

I don't know what happened afterwards. I do hope you have got yourselves relieved out of it.

The Socialist Party met again in Bombay and passed resolutions condemning us, after we left, for our resolutions about Bihar.

Some Kisan workers have issued a statement from Bihar about violence by the Bihar Congressmen against them. Please write me about the Bihar situation and also about yourself to my Bombay address.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai Patel

2. *From the Speaker, Legislative Assembly, Orissa*

Patna  
10 January 1938

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD  
PRESIDENT  
LABOUR ENQUIRY COMMITTEE  
CAWNPORE

QUARREL AMONGST ORISSA CONGRESS GROUPS CRITICAL NONINTERVENTION  
WILL COLLAPSE EVERYTHING REQUEST PROMPT ACTION

SPEAKER  
ORISSA

*3. From the Secretary, Indian Civil Liberties Union*

## INDIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

Bombay Mutual Building  
Sir Pherozshah Mehta Road  
Bombay  
11th January 1938

Dear friend,

I have the pleasure to inform you that you have been elected as a member of the Executive Committee of the Indian Civil Liberties Union. A list of the members of the Committee is herein enclosed for your information. It is very necessary that the Committee should meet as soon as possible. I shall communicate the time and place of meeting after consulting the Chairman.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sd.)  
Secretary

Sjt. Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram, Dighaghat  
Patna.

*Enclosure:**Members of the Executive Committee of the Indian Civil Liberties Union.*

1. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
2. Sjt. D.N. Bahadurji
3. Sjt. K. Bhashyam
4. Sjt. Sarat Chandra Bose
5. Sjt. S.A. Brelvi
6. Shrimati Perin Captain
7. Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee
8. Dr. S.K. Datta
9. Sjt. Bhulabhai J. Desai
10. Sjt. Narendra Deva
11. Sir Syed Wazir Hasan
12. Sjt. Zakir Husain
13. Sjt. N.M. Joshi
14. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan
15. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur
16. Sjt. Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta
17. Sjt. Jayaprakash Narayan
18. Sjt. K.F. Nariman

19. Sjt. Jawaharlal Nehru
20. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
21. Sjt. Rajendra Prasad

4. *From Harekrushna Mahtab, President, Provincial Congress Committee, Utkal*

PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Office, Bakharabad  
P.O. Chandnichouk  
Cuttack  
24th January 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I received the wire that you sent from Cawnpore and I believe you have received the wire that I sent in reply. On account of pressure of work and my absence from the headquarters for the last several days, I could not write to you in detail the situation here.

As regards the situation in Orissa, we have no such trouble worth mentioning as Kisan or Socialist menace. But here all sorts of trouble are created by those who think that they have been wronged by not being given a place in the Ministry or Speakership. You know Godavarish Babu was an aspirant for Speakership. But for various reasons he was not chosen and you know all about it. The last session of the Assembly was utilised by Godavarish Babu for putting the Speaker in the wrong and heckling the Ministers off and on. Attempts were made to create divisions in the party but somehow we could manage this situation till the delegates' election in December. In the meantime, Nilakantha Babu toured throughout Orissa criticising the Ministers and the matter went to such length that an enquiry committee was set up in Puri to enquire into the conduct of the Chief Minister. But Biswanath Babu as the Chief Minister and myself remaining outside managed matters somehow with utmost difficulty, inexperienced though we are, and I make bold to say that our Province does not lag behind so far as the parliamentary programme of Congress is concerned.

Just on the eve of the delegates' election, fresh attempts were made to create troubles in the wrong notion of upsetting the Ministry and the Speakership with the help of the Provincial Congress Committee. This too we managed somehow in other districts. But in Gunjam, the native district of the Chief Minister, virulent propaganda went on against him to the extent that even ordinary volunteers were encouraged to abuse the Chief Minister in the presence of the Collector. It was and is even now propagated in the *New Orissa*, the English daily of Berhampur (Gunjam), that the executives of the P.C.C. are notoriously pro-

Ministerialists and so they should be driven out. Further, the paper circulates that the present Ministry will collapse and in its place will be formed a coalition Ministry consisting of the Raja of Kahlukote, Pandit Godavarish Misra and a Mahammadan gentleman. This repeatedly published report goes on uncontradicted by Godavarish Babu although his attention has been drawn to this several times. On account of this at the background there was trouble in the delegates' election at Gunjam. I need not go into the details here. I kept myself in touch with the A.I.C.C. always and according to the advice of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the delegates of other districts met to decide as to which set of delegates would be allowed to take part in the election of the members of the A.I.C.C. and of office-bearers of the P.C.C., there being two sets of delegates—one declared elected by the Secretary, P.C.C., and the other by Godavarish Misra who was the Election Officer. On the date of this meeting Pandit Nilakantha Das, Godavarish Babu and some other members did not choose to attend the meeting and held a parallel meeting of delegates. In our meeting we appointed Dr. Prafulla Ghosh of Calcutta who happened to be at Cuttack that day as the sole judge in the matter. He, labouring sleeplessly for the whole day, somehow brought about an agreed list of delegates which we all accepted. Then we all assembled under the presidentship of Hon'ble Mukunda Prasad Das, Speaker of the Assembly to elect members of the A.I.C.C. and officers of the P.C.C. Out of 125 delegates 121 were present. We all suggested that Gopa Babu should be the President this year. To this he agreed after much persuasion on condition that complete confidence should be placed in him by all the members. So far as our side was concerned we gave him a blank cheque. But Nilakantha Babu insisted upon taking his nominee as the secretary to which Gopa Babu did not agree. So this move completely failed. Then after the election of the members of the A.I.C.C. when we proceeded on to the election of office-bearers of the P.C.C., I was declared elected and no candidate was set up against me. But after election some members, about 35 in number, went out and they are now publishing threats that they would create troubles and start parallel organisations and all sorts of nonsense. I am trying my best to manage this also.

On the other hand in the Assembly party, Godavarish Babu has been a source of trouble to the Ministers. Almost all the questions come from him. This we are going to stop somehow.

This is our situation. I will be much obliged if you kindly advise me what to do in the circumstances. We are all inexperienced but the ideal of Gandhiji is before our eyes and we go on carefully with certain amount of nervousness. Hope to hear from you soon.

I am sorry I write this long letter when you are ill but I am helpless. I hope you will not please mind this.

Yours sincerely,  
H. Mahtab

*5. From Brajasundar Das and others*

Cuttack  
28 January 1938

RAJENDRA PRASAD  
PATNA

OVER LAKH NORTH ORISSA LANDHOLDERS AND TENUREHOLDERS OF TEMPORARILY SETTLED ESTATES ALL SMALL FEW BIG WILL BE RUINED BY TENANCY LEGISLATION ON ANVIL WHICH IF PASSED WILL LEAD TO CLASS WAR AND DEPRIVE THEM OF ALL RIGHTS PRIVILEGES AND MAKE THEM PAUPERS CRAVE YOUR INTERVENTION CONGRESS MINISTRY UNCOMPROMISING PRAY DIRECT GOPABANDHU CHOUDHURY TO EFFECT COMPROMISE

BRAJASUNDARDAS  
BIRBAR NARAYAN  
BANBIHARIPALIT  
AHMEDBUX  
RADHANATH CHOUDHURI  
LOKANATH MISRA  
LOKANATHANANDA  
MOTILALL PANDIT

*6. To Subhas Chandra Bose*

Cottage, Hospital, Patna  
13th February 1938

My dear Subhas Babu,

I am more deeply distressed and disappointed than I can express to tell you that I am unable to be with you at the Congress session which is going to be a momentous one. I had hoped almost against hope and the doctors had been encouraging that hope that it might be possible after all for me to come to Haripura. But I have had several relapses one after the other—the last one being last night and it is now perfectly clear that I cannot come. I am sure the proceedings will pass off successfully and the session will give fresh impetus to the struggle for Swaraj in which the country is engaged.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

*7. From J.B. Kripalani*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Swaraj Bhawan  
Allahabad  
March 1, 1938

Dear Friend,

I have great pleasure in communicating to you the following resolution of the new Working Committee passed at its first meeting at Haripura on 22.2.38



reconstituting the Parliamentary Sub-Committee for the current session:

“Resolved that the Parliamentary Sub-Committee consisting of the same members as before, namely Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shri Vallabhbhai Patel and Rajendra Babu be formed for the current session to keep in close and constant touch with the Congress Parties in all legislatures in the Provinces, to advise them in all activities and to take necessary action in any case of emergency, The members of the Committee are individually to perform the same functions as before.”

Yours sincerely,  
J.B. Kripalani

Shri Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram  
P.O. Dighaghat  
Patna.

8. *To Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Government of Bihar, Patna*

CONFIDENTIAL & PERSONAL

Cottage, Hospital, Patna  
4th March 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

The constitutional crisis which has arisen in connection with the release of the political prisoners is over and we are all glad that it has been settled in a satisfactory way. We must, however, consider the position of the Congress Ministry in [a] little detail as you have been in office for nearly eight months now. Without any intention of criticising the working of the Ministry as a whole I may point out that you cannot claim that you have done very much to fulfil all that was promised in the Election Manifesto and was expected of a national government. I do not know when the next constitutional crisis will arise. It may come as suddenly and unexpectedly as the last one. I am therefore anxious that the Ministry should get through as many legislative and administrative measures as possible within the shortest possible time so that when the next crisis comes the country may have before it a record of good work done by the Congress Ministry. I can visualise a conflict between the Ministry and the British Government in connection with the introduction of the Federal Constitution. It is possible that an attempt may be made to introduce it some time towards the end of the current year and when that comes I do not know what form the conflict may take. It may be a constitutional deadlock or direct action. In either case normal work of reform and reconstruction will have to be given up, so whatever the Ministry can do between now and September next must be done and I feel that unless you are all

very expeditious in planning and executing the reforms which you may want to introduce you will have failed in your attempt and the Congress will stand discredited at the time of the conflict, when it will need all the support of the people at large. I desire to indicate some points which have struck me and which I would earnestly request the Ministry to consider and carry through in a separate letter which I am sending along with it.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Copy forwarded to Hon'ble Babu Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Hon'ble Dr. Syed Mahmud and Hon'ble Babu Jaglal Choudhry for information.

Rajendra Prasad

*Enclosure:*

Cottage, Hospital  
Patna  
4th March 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

I wish that the Congress Ministry should take up the following measures which I consider necessary. I would divide these into two categories, viz. those which will require legislation and those which may be introduced as administrative measures. It is likely that some of them overlap but that of course you will consider in detail when coming to definite decisions.

### *1. Legislative Measures*

(a) Amendment of the Bihar Tenancy Law. You have already passed one measure but it has not yet been given effect to. No time should be lost in enforcing its provisions and the relief contemplated such as reduction in rent etc. should be made available without delay. I think it will take time to carry out this part of the Act and unless immediate steps are taken you may not be able to complete the process before September next. I am keen that nothing that has to be done by the Government in this connection should be left undone before Bhado next.

You have to introduce another measure dealing with other points which must be done without delay during the session which is opening on the 5th instant. It should be passed by September by both Houses and enforced [so] as to give full effect to it before Bhado next.

(b) So far as I am aware nothing visible and tangible has as yet been done about Prohibition. I think a Bill should be passed during this session and you should not be content with introducing it into one district as an experimental measure. With all our commitments which you may introduce into one district this year, you have to make a plan for total prohibition to be completed within the next

three years. You may not fix the order in which the districts should be taken up at this stage, but your plan should lay down the number of districts to be taken up each year till the process is completed. I would not be satisfied with a plan privately made but I would like it to be announced on the floor of the House as the programme of the Ministry to be carried out. By so doing even if the Ministry goes out your successors will find it difficult to go back upon a plan partly carried out and worked in detail in its entirety.

(c) Education is a very important subject. But beyond the appointment of a Committee I do not know if anything else has been done. As regards the Committee its report is likely to be delayed as its Chairman is going out of India and naturally nothing can be done during his absence. I am anxious that any legislation dealing with Primary Education or for amending the University Act should be undertaken and passed before September next and whatever administrative action has to be taken to introduce the necessary changes which are bound to be of far-reaching and revolutionary character must [be] introduced before, say, November next so that it may be difficult for anyone who may come in later on account of constitutional conflict to upset your plan. I have been thinking over this question with some concern and I feel that the Committee's report should be obtained as soon as possible so that administrative and legislative measures may be taken at the earliest possible opportunity.

(d) I think the Municipal and the Local Self-Government Acts and the Act dealing with Village Panchayats require amendments. In regard to the question of franchise there is a persistent demand on the part of the Musalmans for reservation of seats and perhaps also to a lesser extent for separate electorates. I think we should never agree to separate electorates but we may agree to reservation of seats. It will also be a question as to how best reservation can be given with joint electorates. Will there be fixed constituencies for instance or whether some other method has to be devised to give them reservation along with joint electorates? A further question will also probably be raised about seats for scheduled castes and aborigines. The powers to be conferred on Village Panchayats for dealing with village disputes and village uplift work will also have to be considered and I am indicating these points only to show that the matter is bristling with difficulties and it will require prolonged and detailed consideration before any decisions are arrived at and the Legislative Department also will require time to reduce them to legal phraseology for amending Bills.

(e) We are pledged to repeal repressive laws, particularly emergency Acts.

(f) The cooperative movement needs overhauling and it may be that the Act also needs to be amended.

(g) You have pledged yourself to separate Executive and Judicial functions. It may require amendment of [the] existing Act.

(h) Some small Acts which are of importance from various points of view need amendment to be made effective and useful. Among these I may mention the Food Adulteration Act which is particularly useless at present for preventing adulteration of foodstuffs. The question is becoming very urgent in towns in

respect of ghee, oil and certain other necessities of life like milk etc. The evil is now spreading even to villages and something must be done to enable the people at large to get pure foodstuffs from the market.

(i) The private Irrigation Act needs to be amended so as to enable the Government to execute works of irrigation and recover from the parties liable for it the cost as a Government due.

(j) Embankment Act should be considered and amended so as to facilitate construction and repair of embankments and water channels without much difficulty.

(k) I think legislation for conciliation of debts and prevention of usury is already before the Assembly. They should be passed and enforced.

These are some of the legislative measures which struck me at present as urgent and which I would wish you to enact before September next. It is possible that you may require a prolonged autumn session of the Legislature but you should not grudge this.

(l) There are two other measures which are very important but which perhaps you may take up in 1939 if you are in power. These are measures dealing with Religious Endowments and Temple Entry by Harijans. I shall be pleased if you can get through the Temple Entry Bill also before September next.

## *II. Administrative Measures*

Apart from legislative measures there are many administrative measures which a popular ministry like yours is expected and bound to undertake. I wish you to take them up with the least possible delay.

Please do not misunderstand me when I say that in eight months' stewardship of the Province the Ministry has not done anything to organise three important Departments which are of utmost importance to the people but which are at present practically useless, viz. (1) The Agriculture Department, (2) The Industries Department, and (3) The Forest Department.

A complete reorientation of policy is necessary and for this purpose nothing will be more unwise or more short-sighted than to depend upon the advice of the Departmental heads and the permanent secretariat for light and guidance. You must recognise that the Congress has during the last 17 years adopted and preached certain views which are fundamentally different from the official views which were held till March last year. For instance we can expect no help or guidance in the introduction of village industries of which the most important is naturally spinning. I do not blame them as they have never studied the question and are too much obsessed with their own viewpoint which they have hugged for years so that they have lost the capacity for thinking in a way different from that which they have followed. I am therefore not surprised that in spite of repeated requests from the All India Spinners' Association and the All India Village Industries Association and myself nothing has so far been done to have village industries introduced.

In the matter of agriculture also we have to make the Department more effective and serviceable and it must justify its existence by showing not only that it can produce double of what an ordinary cultivator produces by spending ten times or even more than what the ordinary cultivator does (including of course the overhead charges). But it must show further that the ordinary cultivator generally in a district or in a subdivision can get more than what he used to get without a proportionate increase in the expenditure. The time is gone when we should be satisfied with a few model farms which help and serve nobody.

The Forest Department, I believe, is the most worthless department under the Government. If I remember aright the Government spends a lot in maintaining a whole hierarchy of officers beginning with members of the Indian Forest Service and ending with men of the status of Choukidars and spending lakhs over them and getting practically nothing beyond what is spent on them. The Government will not be financially worse off if not one of these officers were in existence. It should be made into a highly profitable department of the Government and I believe it can be done, if not immediately, within a few years' time. Therefore a scheme for improving the income from forests should be immediately devised and officers concerned should be asked to produce it and to execute it or to go so that someone who can do that may get a chance.

My remarks apply more or less with equal force to the P.W.D. and the P.H.D. The P.W.D. needs to be overhauled both for the sake of economy and purity in administration. The P.H.D. has to do more extensive work. I think it will be both economical and conducive to efficiency if the P.H.D. and Medical Relief are combined. At any rate so far as rural areas are concerned I have seen P.H. officers touring in villages disinfecting wells during cholera epidemics and refusing to prescribe for or treat actual cases [of] cholera. It is of course somewhat a technical matter and you will have to consult people competent to advise you in this connection. But it stands to reason that medical staff employed during normal times in giving medical relief may also attend to sanitation, and sanitary staff employed particularly when any epidemic breaks out may also treat cases of attack. It should not be necessary to maintain a health staff which may have nothing to do during normal times and it may be possible to maintain a staff which may be concentrated in any particular area when occasion arises either for sanitation or for medical relief or for both. I would therefore suggest that this avenue of retrenchment by reducing particularly the supervising staff of two departments should be explored. Further, a detailed scheme for extensive medical relief and improvement of public health should be devised and given effect to.

In this connection you must remember that there are areas where plague and malaria are prevalent in an endemic form. Other epidemics also take their toll. Something must be done to fight this and that without delay. Work in this connection is likely to show immediate results and appeal to the suffering masses.

Prevention of corruption in Government offices and Departments particularly in the Police and the Registration Departments and in the courts is a crying

necessity. I think measures should be devised to prevent it. I do not think the people yet feel and the police yet realise that it is the duty and function of the police to serve and protect the people and not to rule over or oppress them. Their whole outlook has to be changed. It may take time but if a beginning is not made now I do not know when it can be made. While on the one hand the members of the police force must be made to realise their duty and function they should be also given protection against unnecessary badgering. Their behaviour must change and they must work and behave like friends of the people and enemies of the enemies of society and not only as masters of the people. It is a moral question and I do not know how this reform can be effected but the top men in the services must be made to realise this.

Reform of jail is also necessary. There has to be a reorientation of policy. I believe the jails can be made self-sufficient if not a department giving profit to the Government. With such big population, mostly of able-bodied men, a jail should be able to support itself and those who look after it. But this can happen only if the time of prisoners is utilised in a rational way so as to get utmost value out of them and make them better citizens. As it is, the object seems to get the least out of them with utmost trouble and inconvenience to them. Wherever necessary and possible more lands should be made available to jails so that they become self-sufficient in respect not only of their food supply and vegetables but also for the cotton which they may spin and weave into cloth. There is no reason why they may not develop dairies in jails which may supply pure milk and butter and ghee and dahi to the towns where jails are situated. There is weaving [of] carpets and [durries] in jails. This may be extended and other industries may be introduced. But apart from increasing income from jails it is necessary to introduce a little human element in the administration laying more and more emphasis on the reformatory side and less on the punitive. The question of corruption arises in the case of jails also and it has to be dealt with.

We are pledged to do whatever we can for the uplift of the scheduled castes and aborigines. I would suggest a separate portfolio to be created for this purpose and special drive to be given to work in this connection. It is necessary from a humanitarian point of view and is not less justifiable on grounds of expediency. Their education, general economic uplift and provision for them in services are necessary to make them and others feel that they are not different from the rest of the population.

I understand that the questions of electrification and flood prevention have been engaging the attention of the Government. It is necessary to push forward these schemes so that a beginning may be made at an early date.

In the Election Manifesto there is a promise of introducing collective farming. I think it is possible to have an experiment made in this connection without touching property rights of individuals. The Government should make this experiment in two or three suitable places where the Agriculture Department should cooperate with non-official organisations like the Congress. It can only be on a voluntary basis, i.e., the owners of land should agree amongst themselves to

have collective farming and to distribute the produce in proportion to the land belonging to each after deducting the cost of cultivation. I should like this experiment to be made for three classes of crops, viz. paddy, sugar and other crops like maize, arhar, wheat, etc. It should be first ascertained what the minimum size of a farm should be to make it profitable if cultivated with latest scientific instruments like tractors etc. and with best manure. I am not unaware of the difficulty in inducing kisans to allow their land to be cultivated and mixed up with other people's lands involving obliteration of boundaries. Further difficulty may arise by rendering the kisans whose lands have been taken unemployed. But these difficulties can be solved by a detailed survey of plots and keeping a complete record and by employing the very men whom wages may be paid. Other details may be worked out.

Agriculture in Bihar cannot improve if the cattle go on deteriorating as they have been doing. Therefore along with agricultural improvement a scheme for improvement of cattle should also be devised.

The Province is fast becoming a big industrial Province. We have a large body of labour employed in coal mines. We have one of the biggest industrial centres in India at Jamshedpur and other big workshops exist at Jamalpur. A large number of sugar factories have been working for some years. Dehri promises to be another big industrial centre. With so many different industries employing lakhs of people the question of labour is bound to assume an ever-growing importance. There is no department worth the name that I am aware of which deals with labour. The Labour Department of the Bombay Government is, I believe, the best organised. It collects statistics, helps workers, otherwise works in such a way as to assist the Government with facts and figures whenever it needs them for deciding its line of action. I think the Government needs a well equipped Department of Labour which will do the work of the Province as is being done in Bombay.

Similarly the Province needs a well-equipped Publicity Department which will keep the people informed of the Government activities and deal with many unjust or unfair criticism of the Government measures and contradict and correct any wrong statements.

Another thing which ought to receive your immediate attention is the question of retrenchment in expenditure. I think there is considerable justification in the criticism that the Government should not launch upon taxation before it has exhausted all avenues of retrenchment. I may suggest a few points that struck me. It is not enough that the Ministers under a resolution of the Congress should take Rs.500 as their salaries. The ideal should be to make that the maximum salary for any service of the Government. I would therefore suggest that the question of services should be considered. A fresh scale should be made for new entrants so that at any rate in the future the burden may be reduced. While those that are guaranteed their salaries and prospects may not be touched there is no reason why new entrants should have the same scale and why those in service should get anything more than what they are promised. Therefore all allowances which are

not compulsory to be paid should be cut down and no such allowances should be sanctioned in any case by the Congress Ministry. Travelling and other allowances should be reduced to the minimum permissible under the law and there should be a strict control so as to avoid duplication of journeys and ensure a rational programme of work.

Unnecessary posts should be abolished. I might mention for example the post of Commissioner of Divisions. Some posts may be abolished if the Medical and P.H.D. are amalgamated. I understand there is a special staff in the Excise Department for guarding the Nepal frontier. I do not know how far the expenditure on it is justified. This may be considered for abolition. A detailed examination of the various departments with a view to reduction should be introduced. There should be emphasis laid on economy in the various departments.

The summer exodus to the hills may be stopped and the expenses saved. Some saving may be effected by reorganisation of Honorary Magistrates and appointments of Honorary Munsiffs to deal with civil suits. Care should be taken to avoid corruption and ensure fair justice.

I have forgotten to mention one thing which I consider to be very important. The Government should insist upon all purchases to be made in India of swadeshi goods. I may mention for example stationery, furniture for furnishing either offices or hospitals, houses for Government officers, and so forth. All cloth purchases should be of Khadi and, where not practicable, from swadeshi mills.

The letter has already become very long. I am sure each one of the points mentioned herein will require much larger space to be dealt with in full. But I have only dealt the points and wish the Ministry to consider them in detail. The important thing, however, is that they should be implemented by legislation and administrative orders before, say, the end of September next.

I realise that it will involve much labour, much hard thinking and much drive to accomplish all this. But I can expect nothing less and the Ministry ought to do nothing less if it wants to justify its existence.

I am sending copies of this letter to your other colleagues.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Copy forwarded to the Parliamentary Secretaries for information.

#### 9. *From Jimutbahan Sen*

19 Hardinge Road  
Patna  
6 March 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I feel so thankful to you for having thought of sending us, the Parliamentary Secretaries, a copy of your letter, dated 4th March, addressed to Hon'ble Babu



Sri Krishna Sinha, containing suggestions, so valuable and necessary for the administration of the Government of this Province, especially by a ministry formed by the Congress. I daresay the Ministers responsible for the respective departments in which the suggestions fall will attend to them and carry them out with the sanctity these should command as coming from you. There are a few things which I would like to mention herein as they do not find any place in your letter. I hope you would not consider [it] as presumpt[uous] on my part. We have been in the Government for about eight months, and I feel that steps should have been taken by now to consider the suggestions I am stating below.

1. We should formally make a rule or a convention to discuss every new measure of legislation or administrative policy in a meeting of all the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries before bringing them before the Legislature or into action in the country. This is not done now. The Ministers probably discuss among them, or at a meeting of the Council of Ministers, but the Parliamentary Secretaries are kept out of all knowledge of any impending Bills or measures of administrative policies, excepting perhaps the one Parliamentary Secretary in whose department the measure falls. He knows it probably because he is allowed to deal with it at the initial stage. I am sure you will agree with me that the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries should be called together to meet, discuss and decide as to the form which a legislative measure should take, or an administrative order should issue, whether such should issue at all. It is true that recently introduction has been made to convene such meetings of the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries but somehow or other the importance of such a meeting or of convening such a meeting has not been fully appreciated with the result that individual Ministers, at least the Parliamentary Secretaries, have been in dark about many measures introduced in the House or in the administration. Where a measure taken, whether legislative or administrative, which involves a radical change of policy, the matter is vital. If you are going to discuss the subject of your letter with Sri Krishna Babu or with the Ministers I would like this matter to be discussed and decided.

2. It is not yet the practice to ask the Parliamentary Secretaries to attend the meetings of the Council of Ministers. Of course the term is the "Council of Ministers", and as such the Parliamentary Secretaries do not come into the picture at all. On occasions some of us have been invited to attend some meetings of the Council of Ministers held at the Government House but to advise simply in matters concerning our respective departments. In England Parliamentary Secretaries are members of the Cabinet. At these meetings of the Council of Ministers which according to the eyes [of] law are the meetings of the Cabinet, the final shape of a legislative or an administrative measure is taken; therefore, in my view of the matter, all the Parliamentary Secretaries should get the opportunity of making their contribution to a legislative or an administrative measure about to be given a final shape before introduction. The convention should be established to ask all the Parliamentary Secretaries to attend the meetings of what is now known as "Council of Ministers". What is decided at the

Council of Ministers is made known to the Departmental Secretaries as a matter of course but not to the Parliamentary Secretaries. This is peculiar.

3. The Departmental Secretaries are still more in confidence of the Ministers than the Parliamentary Secretaries—I do not mean to insinuate thereby that the Ministers do not confide in or rely upon [their] Parliamentary Secretar[ies], but the legal position is what I have described. This position as between the Parliamentary Secretary and Departmental Secretary in their relationship with the Minister should be corrected, in my opinion.

4. It is no use hiding from you that some of us, the Parliamentary Secretaries, entertain the feeling that we are not relied upon or trusted by the Ministers with whom we have been attached. This is an unhappy position of things and if any of us is inefficient or untrustworthy it would be better to dismiss him on that score but to carry on an existence without trust or reliance is more than one can bear. The complaint of such Parliamentary Secretaries is that files are kept away from them, matters are hidden from them, or they are not consulted even in ordinary matters, what to speak of important ones.

5. Too much sanctity is given to files marked 'Confidential' by the office. And much is made [of] the fact that the Ministers are [under] an Oath of Secrecy which the Parliamentary Secretaries do not have to take as yet. What can there be confidential from a Parliamentary Secretary either from administrative point of view or public point of view if such matters are not kept confidential from the Secretariat staff? Are we not gentlemen of position and trust? Should there be more trust placed on the Departmental Secretary, Under-Secretary, Registrar, and office assistants and even stenographers than on a Parliamentary Secretary? Let the Parliamentary Secretaries be also put upon an Oath of Secrecy if his gentlemanliness is not to be relied upon for keeping a matter secret where such is to be kept so.

6. Some of us do feel that there should not be any of the office staff, be he the Secretary or other office-staff, to intervene between the Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary. It is not suggested that the Minister shall accept all the advice of his Parliamentary Secretary, but Parliamentary Secretary's advice upon every matter should be sought upon in his department, and nothing should be done without his knowledge.

7. While you have dealt with the question of scheduled castes, aborigines and the Muhammadans, you have overlooked the case of Bengalis of this Province who are being treated as Pariahs, if I may use the expression. A feeling of great, very great, consternation among them has appeared since the Congress Ministry has assumed office. So far, from the side of the Bengalis nothing has been done to merit the treatment which the Bengalis are experiencing at the hands of the present Government. My position has become too awkward for words. I have to shirk my own constituency, my own native district, and I have written a few letters of resignation from the Parliamentary Secretaryship but friends intervening, including Murli Babu, Binodananda Jha, I have not given them.

8. Are you not going to take up this question seriously in your hand before the

name of the Congress is allowed to stink into the nostrils of every Bengali inhabitant of this Province? For a few domiciled Bengalis are you going to allow the entire Bengali community inhabitant of Bihar to be alienated from the Congress? Why should the Congress bother about making communal or racial differences between the so-called Bihari and the Bengali? Can't it take a broader view of things? Must our actions be such as to cause in a very important section of the people of the Province a feeling of animosity for the Congress? Why should have anybody any feeling of grievance against Congress administration? Does not Congress stand for all? Why should a Congress Ministry play into the hands of communalists like Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha and others? Do we not profess to make no distinction between an Indian and Indian? Have not the Congress at Karachi laid down as its fundamental principle to create no discrimination for reasons of caste, colour, creed or sex among Indians for public appointments, facilities in trade, commerce and education? Was not this fundamental principle reiterated at Calcutta last year and in the Presidential speech again at the Haripura Congress? Why should we still think of making stricter Domicile Rules and to apply to Bengalis only? The rules as existing are a blot upon any Government. I am sending a cutting from the *Behar Herald* which describes the character of the existing domicile certificates. I gave Atul Babu a letter from a friend of mine who is an indigenous inhabitant of Manbhum in which he has quoted a recent circular issued by the Revenue Department and I understand from Atul Babu that he showed you the letter and you have asked him to speak to Sri Krishna Babu. I am enclosing the letter in original for your perusal again. There is a question of Jamuna Karjee on the subject tomorrow. One need not take exception to Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha asking questions, but certainly a Congress member of the Assembly should not perpetuate communalism. If you go through the proceedings of the Assembly, you will be sick of the fact that you ever allowed the Congress to take part in the election. We are bound by our election pledges not to make any discrimination. As a result of our passive attitude, and, in many instances, helping attitude, to such questions in the Assembly and over opinions expressed on files, we have given fillip to the Bihari assistants to make all sorts of proposals to oust Bengali assistants from the field of competition. The beauty of the whole thing is that all non-Bihari elements, such as Gujarati, Sindhi, Punjabi and U.P. have combined against the Bengali assistants in service. The Bengali assistants are in a state [of] terror—the whole Bengali community in Bihar are in a state of [terror] for the acts and orders of the Congress Government. Do you think such a state of affairs is desirable?

9. Manbhum is greatly agitated, so are Chaibasa, Santal Parganas and Purnea. Already there is a move to appeal to the All India Congress Committee and Mahatma Gandhi to set up an enquiry. But with you at the helm of affairs of our Province, this should be nipped in the bud. The Bengali community has a great confidence in you; you have [any] amount of capabilities and you have any amount of boldness and courage for right action. If it was not for your illness you would have been approached by now. I am told that Prafulla Dada [Mr. P.R.

Das] has already written to you. Before you go away to Zeradia please convene a meeting of the representative Bengalis to meet you and the Ministers and arrive at a common solution of the question.

10. If the tension as at present existing continues for a little time more I will find it difficult to remain as a Parliamentary Secretary or even a Member of the Assembly. Of course this is nothing much for a big organisation like the Congress, but from this fact an estimate of my feeling and of awkwardness may be gauged.

11. I also apologise for this very long letter. But I have dealt with a few vital matters and you will excuse for the length of the letter which could not have been avoided. Nor do I think that I should have kept these within and without letting you know about them.

With my best respects,

Yours affectionately,  
Jimut

Enclosure not included.

*10. From Vallabhbhai Patel*

Purushottam Mansion  
Opp. Opera House  
Bombay  
9th March 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

I have not heard from you since a very long time. We missed you at Haripura so much. May I take it that you have now completely recovered?

You must have seen that interim report of the Textile Inquiry Committee of which Sjt. Jairamdas was the Chairman. This report has been accepted by the Bombay Government and its recommendations have been given effect to by the millowners in this Presidency. What is the position in Cawnpore? Do you still continue to be the Chairman? We must soon bring the Cawnpore question to an end. The labour there has been absolutely suppressed because they put themselves in [the] wrong by taking to violence. They are not properly organised. The Bombay report will be very helpful to them.

I expect you will be able to attend the Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting in the last week of this month in Orissa.

Hope you are doing well.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat  
Patna.

11. *From Subhas Chandra Bose*

PERSONAL &amp; URGENT

38-2 Elgin Road  
Calcutta  
11th March 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I am enclosing herewith copy of a letter which I have addressed to the Congress Premiers yesterday. It would be desirable for the members of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee to attend this meeting of the Congress Premiers and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad agrees with me on this point. After the date and venue of the meeting (viz. 2nd April at Calcutta) is on the whole suitable, I shall finally fix upon that date and venue. The Working Committee can meet soon after either in Calcutta or at Puri and matters decided upon at the Premiers' meeting may be then placed before the Working Committee if necessary. I hope you will make it convenient to attend the Premiers' meeting. I shall be glad to know if the dates, 2nd April for the Premiers' meeting and 5th April for the Working Committee, will suit you.

An early reply, preferably by wire, will greatly help.

Yours affectionately,  
Subhas C. Bose

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Patna.

*Enclosure:*

(To the Congress Premiers)

March 10, 1938

Dear Friend,

At the Haripura Congress and after, I had occasion to meet some of our Congress Ministers and discuss with them some of our common problems. As a result of that I have been thinking that it would be desirable to tackle the more important problems that confront our Ministers on a uniform all-India basis. Some of our Ministers have themselves suggested that their schemes should be considered and if possible adopted by the Congress Ministries in other Provinces.

When I was at Wardha before coming here, I placed the matter before Mahatmaji and asked for his advice. He heartily approved of the idea that I should convene a meeting of Congress Ministers and endeavour to discuss on what problems or schemes we could have uniform action in all the seven

Provinces. I, therefore, propose to convene a meeting of the Congress Premiers in the first week of April before or after the Working Committee meeting. I should be glad if you kindly let me know as soon as possible whether you could come to Calcutta for this purpose early in April, say, on the 2nd April. I should also like you to send me as early as possible a list of the problems or schemes on which you would desire uniform action in the seven Provinces. After receiving suggestions from the different ministries, I shall be in a position to draw up the final agenda for the meeting. You will, of course, have to bring with you as many Ministers as you would consider necessary and possible.

As at present contemplated, the Working Committee will meet immediately after the Premiers' meeting either at Calcutta or in Puri (perhaps in the last resort at Wardha). Any matters for which the Working Committee sanction may be necessary will be placed before that body and the Premiers could also attend the Working Committee meeting. The Premiers' meeting will probably take two or three days in which case the Working Committee could meet on the 5th April. If, however, this is not possible the Premiers' meeting will take place independently at some other time or place. But the disadvantage in that case will be this that any matters for which Working Committee's sanction will be necessary, will have to wait till the next meeting of that body.

An early reply or wire is solicited.

Yours sincerely,  
S.C.B.

## 12. To Prafulla Chandra Ghosh (Calcutta)

Cottage, Hospital  
Patna  
12th March 1938

My dear Dr. Ghosh,

I am now well enough to write to you although I am still in hospital. Weakness continues and I require a little more rest after which I hope I shall be able to resume my normal work.

I write to you on a particular business. The Government here wants a gentleman to organise the village reconstruction work on our line and according to our ideas. The Department people have their own views and it is difficult to change them. A man with clear ideas, capable of planning and executing the plan, is required. I could not think of anyone except yourself who could do it. It may not be necessary for you to remain here long but if you could organise and set the work going, say, in a year or two, nothing could be better. I shall of course get assurances that you will have the support of the Ministry in all that may be necessary for carrying out the programme. Before I formally ask you to accept an

offer I would like to know if you could free yourself for some time and accept this. The opportunities we have for pushing forward this scheme of ours are great in this Province and I would not like to miss them. You are at a disadvantage in this respect in your own Province and hence my temptation to make this request to you. If we could make it successful in one Province there will be undoubtedly a great fillip given to the movement as a whole all over the country. It is also from this point of view that I have thought of you. You could carry out whatever schemes we may have under encouraging circumstances here and that is a great thing. Please reply very soon so that I may proceed further in the matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

13. *From Bankim Bihari Sen (The Rama Krishna Society)*

Gaya  
13th March 1938

My dear Sir,

It put me to vigorous thinking for four days to decide if I should write to you and I have finally decided to write. But before I begin my letter I beg to refer to my letter to you, officially, just after the selection of the Congress candidates for the last municipal elections at Gaya, and submit that though a thorough Congressman (believe me) as I have been, the incident brought a sort of chill in my ardour.

Yet, the other day, when some of my friends here asked me to join a gathering of the Bengalis (permanent residents of the Province included) at the local Durgabari premises, I avoided it, lest I [should] be drawn into a communalistic turmoil. I have since learnt that the meeting was an offshoot of the provincial attempt of organising the Bengali settlers of the Province and was a thoroughly social gathering, having nothing to do with politics.

But how shocked and abhorred I felt I cannot describe when I read the newspaper report of an answer given by the Hon'ble Premier to a question by S.J. Manindra Nath Mukerji in our Assembly House. I had yet a lingering hope that there was possibly an omission of a word to give a different meaning whatsoever, but all my hopes were dashed to the ground when I came across a speech delivered by Mr. Mukerjee in the Assembly who challenged the Hon'ble Premier to contradict his statement and his challenge went unanswered.

It may be noted that the grievance of Mr. Mukerjee was not against Mr. Krishna Ballabh Sahay or Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha, personally; but the grievances are against the Premier and his Parliamentary Secretary—the grievances are against the Congress Government of the Province as a whole.

I have since painfully gone through the letter of Mr. P.R. Das, the editorials of

the *Searchlight* and also the editorial of the *Bihar Herald*. I really wonder where will all these acrimonious bickerings and counter-bickerings lead us to.

Sir, my family, like innumerable others, have been living in Bihar for the last one hundred years and we have certainly the same devotion to the cause of the Province as any of your Congress executives. For my part I can boldly proclaim that my services to my brethren of this Province have not been a whit less in ardour and character than any of your so-called "true sons of Bihar" and I feel as much pride in calling myself a Bihari as any of the honourable ministers and their parliamentary secretaries.

I beg to submit further, Sir, that I, for my part, have always felt a sense of keen humiliation at the stooping I had to undergo while demanding a certificate of domicile. And, as the days wore on, authorities in the Province developed more and more doggedness in their (more) demand and (less) supply of these certificates from these poor Hindus, and, mark please, only the Hindus, whose forefathers committed the crime of hailing from Bengal into this Province and of having Hindu Bengali names.

They demand certificates of domicile not only in cases of employment but also in cases of admission into the schools and colleges and in *awarding prizes for merit showed in the different examinations*! One will not wonder if shopkeepers and washermen and barbers develop the idea of demanding domicile certificates from their respective customers. There is no wonder therefore in the day-to-day increase in the number of applications for the issue of certificates of domicile. One thought that the advent of Congress Government would bring a change in the provincial outlook and the people of the Province would be taught to develop the idea of a united India; but the viciousness of provincialism is [from] day to day in the ascendance and that too with a vengeance!

It was certainly most unwise of the Premier even to allow such a narrow thought creep into his mind, what to speak of giving vent to such feelings in his official dealings and actions. Unwise, because instances like this undermine the prestige of the Congress and unwise also because these will afford fresh and firm grounds to the tottering Khwaja-Proja clique in Bengal to stand upon.

Sir, I have a great regard for you personally and I have been anxiously waiting for your voice to end all this hue and cry in the Press. It is only meet that the Congress should immediately handle the matter and deal with it to end disintegration and rupture. I, on behalf of my community, approach you to rectify and amend matters as they stand. Let the Congress ministry in Bihar not undo half a century's work of the Indian National Congress for the making of a united India. Let the ministry not exasperate the Bengali speaking settlers in the Province to develop into a second Ulster or to play second fiddle to the Muslim League. Let not the *Searchlight* fulminate into a second *Star of India* to boot!

I pray to God that He will make you rise equal to the occasion. I beseech you in the name of our Mother to strike the iron while it is still hot. You gave such an



assurance when you received the very kind donation of Sri Jagadishchandra, and now is the time for you to act.

Vande Mataram!

I remain, Sir,  
Obediently yours in the services  
of our Motherland,  
Bankim Bihari Sen

Rajendra Prasad  
President  
Bihar Provincial Congress Committee  
Patna.

14. *To Subhas Chandra Bose (Calcutta)*

Cottage, Hospital  
Patna  
14th March 1938

My dear Subhas Babu,

I received your letter yesterday. As I have wired to you I will try to attend the meeting in Calcutta in April. I am still in hospital but very much better now and hope to be discharged within the next few days.

As I had not been permitted to attend to any serious work or even correspondence until a few days ago, I did not write to congratulate you on the splendid session of the Congress under your presidency and its most successful termination. The ministerial crisis has also been resolved in a satisfactory way. We are now in a position to think out in detail some programme of work. Some days ago I addressed a letter to the Chief Minister of my Province putting forward my suggestions as to what should be done by the Ministry. I feel that our ministers should act quickly and make their presence felt in the various departments of Government so that people might see that the Congress ministry not only stands for but is also capable of accomplishing some good to them. I am therefore glad that you have thought of this meeting of Chief Ministers. I am not so sure about the date suggested by you. In this Province the Legislative Assembly will be in session till some time in April, as they have several Bills pending which can be taken up only in April, March being occupied with the Budget. I think Babu Sri Krishna Sinha will write to you separately.

I am enclosing copy of my letter to the Chief Minister referred to above.

One question has arisen in which we require your opinion and guidance. You might have seen that an anti-tuberculosis fund is being raised all over the country. It is associated with the name of the King and Lady Linlithgow has issued an appeal. They have fixed 27th March as a special day for collection. Congress ministers have joined in the appeal and the collectors of some of the

districts in this Province have asked for the cooperation and help of the Congress Committees in collection. They have sent small flags for being sold at a minimum price of one anna each on 27th. They have sent some to the Provincial Congress Committee and to other Congress offices. The flag is a small paper flag with the picture of the crown on one side and 'Anti-Tuberculosis Fund' printed on the other side. The question that has been put to the Provincial office here is—what should Congress Committees and individual Congressmen do, when asked to help in collection and selling these flags? Our ministers have joined in the appeal. I remember on one occasion the fact that Dr. Rajan of Madras had delivered a speech at a meeting of the Fund was mentioned before the Working Committee. His speech was not liked but it was felt that there was no objection to helping in collection of the fund. I should be obliged for your instruction in this connection so that I may give necessary directions to the districts here. I imagine that the fund will perhaps be partly distributed to the Provinces and spent on tuberculosis clinics and sanatoriums and partly spent on some central institution. There is no doubt that the purpose is a most beneficent and urgent one, and it was this consideration which influenced the Working Committee members. An early reply on this point is solicited.

I hope you are keeping good health after all the strain you have had to undergo ever since your return from Europe.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Enclosure not included.

15. *From Dr. Syed Mahmud, Minister of Education, Bihar*

Patna  
17 March 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I send you a letter from one Mr. Ali Hussain of Arrah. I do not remember to have met this gentleman, but I have asked him to come and see me in April. Generally I receive letters for service or to redress some grievances, but this letter is of [a] different nature. It points out our weaknesses in the Congress organisation and danger ahead of us. We should carefully consider this friendly advice. Please read it carefully.

With kind regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Syed Mahmud

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
Patna.

Enclosure not included.

16. *From Prafulla Chandra Ghosh*

ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION  
(BENGAL)

249D, Bowbazar Street  
Calcutta  
17 March 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I was delighted to have your letter after a long time. I am glad to learn that you will be able to resume your normal work soon.

Regarding your proposal I would like to see you and discuss things before I decide any way. I showed your letter to Mahadevbhai yesterday and we discussed about it. He will talk with Bapu and let me know Bapu's opinion in the matter. I do not know if you are coming to the Gandhi Seva Sangh Conference or to the meeting of the Working Committee which is going to be held in Calcutta on the 1st April. Then I may discuss things with you here, otherwise I would like to see you where you ask me to do.

With best regards,

Yours very sincerely,  
Prafulla Chandra Ghosh

17. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

Gujarat Prantik Samiti  
Ahmedabad  
17 March 1938

My dear Rajenbabu,

I got your letter of the 13th here today. It is the first one written by you after your illness. I am glad you have been feeling that you are strong enough to come to the meeting but you must not attempt it as the doctors want you to rest. I had no idea that you were still in the hospital.

I am going to Delhi on the 20th and from there I propose to reach Orissa for the 25th meeting.

Bapu has gone to Calcutta and he will meet us all there.

Where do you propose to go for rest? It is better to rest now and to wait for rejoining your duty till you are completely recovered.

I thought you had already got a copy of the Bombay report. Probably they did not send you as you were not well. I have asked the Lucknow office to send you a copy. The Bihar Government must have got one as it has been sent to all the Provincial Governments.

I hope the Kisan trouble or the trouble from the Kisan organisation has now ceased.

Hoping you are all right,

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

18. *From the Governor, Bihar*

Government House,  
Patna  
19th March 1938

My dear Mr. Rajendra Prasad,

I think the Hon'ble Prime Minister has told you that it is proposed to hold a public meeting on Monday, March 28th, 1938, at 6 p.m. at the Sinha Institute in support of the Anti-Tuberculosis Fund in regard to which an appeal has been issued by Her Excellency the Marchioness of Linlithgow. I very much hope that you will attend and will speak in support of this very important appeal. I understand that you are a good deal better now and I hope you have made a complete recovery.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sd.)

Rajendra Prasad, Esq.  
Patna.

19. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

Purushottam Bldg.  
Opp. Opera House  
Bombay-4  
20 March 1938

My dear Rajenbabu,

I sent you a wire yesterday as I thought you had wired to me to Bombay asking me to agree to come to Bihar on the 6th for the inauguration of the Prohibition Campaign in Saran District.

I find now that this telegram was not from you but from the Excise Minister. Do you really want me to go to Saran District for that purpose? If you want me I will go but if you think that I can be spared then you must release me. I am so very busy these days.

I am going now to Delhi for 3 days and from there I will go to Delang to attend the [Gandhi Seva] Sangh meeting. Then there is a meeting of the W.C. at Calcutta.

Hope you are improving. Don't leave your place till the doctors permit. You can take your time.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbai

20. *To Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar Government*

Cottage, Hospital  
Patna  
21st March 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

By your courtesy I was able to attend two of the informal meetings of the Ministers and the Parliamentary Secretaries. As it may not be possible for me to attend any more of such meetings I desire to place before you and your colleagues my impressions and suggestions about such meetings.

It did not appear to me that the meetings were at all business-like. They looked more like drawing-room gatherings where all kinds of subjects are talked about without leading anyone anywhere. When I suggested these meetings I had a definite purpose in view, and to make the position clear I take the liberty of reiterating the same. I look upon these informal meetings as occasions for enabling all the members associated with the Government of the Province (a) to get acquainted with all important matters that have happened in the various Departments under the different Ministries; (b) to get report about actions taken regarding any decisions arrived at by the Government; (c) to discuss and decide upon future programme and plan. All this is necessary to make the joint responsibility of the Cabinet real and intelligent, so that each member is able to support his colleagues not only because they happen to belong to one party but also because each has had a hand in making important decisions. Without it joint responsibility becomes at its best a hollow mockery and at its worst an unreasonable demand on the honesty of an individual Minister. [These] informal gatherings should be made real occasions for exchanging notes and deciding plans and actions. For this purpose the following steps are suggested:

1. Each Minister and each Parliamentary Secretary should report what action he or his Department has taken in respect of all matters that have come up since the preceding meeting.

2. He should also report what steps have been taken to give effect to any decisions which were previously arrived at.

3. After report is finished each Minister and Parliamentary Secretary should bring up for discussion and decision all important matters of his Department. These should include not only matters of policy but also administrative action such as resolutions and circulars of Government. All legislative measures which are contemplated are of course to be placed before the meeting. But I would suggest that even important appointments should be discussed, as nothing in our country creates more misunderstanding and gives greater handle for agitation than appointments. To enable the discussion contemplated under this head to be useful and real it would be best for each member to send a day before the meeting a list of items he wishes to be discussed. These may relate to his Department or to the Department of his colleagues. All these should be collected together and should form the agenda for the informal meeting. The necessary files relating to these items for consideration should be made available for reference if necessary. Decisions—but not discussions—should be recorded so that they may be available for future reference.

I desire to make it clear that I have no wish that [in] all these informal meetings there should be full-dress debates or that the proceedings should [be] formal as in a public meeting. But what I have suggested is necessary to make the discussions real and useful.

I hope you and your colleagues will consider these suggestions and adopt them, if they appeal to you. I have felt strongly on the matter and have therefore pressed it so often before. If I were a member of the Cabinet, it would be impossible for me to function effectively or to take the responsibility for the action of my colleagues as I must in a Cabinet with joint responsibility, without some such procedure being adopted to keep myself informed about all important matters taking place in the various Departments and enable me to take part in all important decisions. The matters have come home to me with greater force after the late ministerial crisis in regard to which I have reasons to think that all members of the Cabinet and the Parliamentary Secretaries were not aware of the developments which led to it till a rather late stage. I would earnestly wish you not to allow such risk in future.

I am forwarding copies of this letter to your colleagues. It would of course be treated as confidential.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

21. *From the Governor, Bihar*

Government House  
Patna  
21st March 1938

My dear Mr. Rajendra Prasad,

I am glad to hear that you are better in health, but very sorry that you cannot attend the meeting on 28th March. I recognise that the notice given was short and

I apologise for it. As you cannot be here, may I have your permission to quote your letter. I am sure it will have a good effect in making the appeal successful. I would quote the following extract:

Tuberculosis is spreading with greater rapidity in the Province not only in the towns but also in villages and I have known families being annihilated in course of a few years. The attempt to check it is urgently called for and has not come a day too soon. I hope the Fund for which an appeal has been made by Her Excellency Lady Linlithgow and with which your Excellency is also associated, will be successful and the good and humane work of fighting this fell disease will have a good start. I would have deemed it a privilege to support it at the public meeting but as I have to go away I beg to be excused.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sd.)

Rajendra Prasad, Esq.  
Patna.

22. *From Mahadev Desai*

Woodburn Park  
Calcutta  
22 March 1938

My dear Rajenbabu,

I have your two letters. It was such a joy to see your handwriting after such a long time, and it will be a greater joy to meet you at Delang. I had decided to come to see you if you had not been permitted to go to Delang or Calcutta.

Bapu mentioned that friend's case to Nazamuddin, but the stars seem to be against us this time, and this visit threatens to be infructuous. But whenever an occasion arises I will remember the friend's name and press his claim. Bapu, thank God, has been bearing the strain well, but one never knows how long this can last. He cannot take risks, and I have an impression that he is continually taking risks. But what can we do? He is in his hands.

About that hoax I wonder if there is anything doing. Do you think any one would take it seriously? Anyway I am defering taking action until we meet.

Yours affectionately,  
Mahadev

23. *From Jagannath Misra*

Ganjam  
4 April 1938

Sir,

In your joint statement issued through the Associated Press and published in *A.B. Patrika* dated 2.4.38 regarding the settlement effected among the Orissa Congressmen, I beg to invite your attention to some of the sentences found therein:

1. We warned those responsible for forming a parallel P.C.C. and a separate group in the Assembly, that such indiscipline would make them liable to disciplinary action and that if they had any grievance, they must report to the proper authorities instead of taking the law in their own hands.
2. Sj. Harekrushna Mahtab very generously made the suggestion that arrangements could even now be adopted and he and the Secretaries of the P.C.C. as also the members of the Working Committee would be willing to resign their places if that could restore peace.

I regret to point out that during the discussions regarding P.C.C. affairs, you never warned those who formed the parallel P.C.C. and the question of taking disciplinary action against them was not given expression to either by you or by anyone of the A.I.C.W.C. members who took part in the discussion. You are aware and it was conclusively proved by the evidence of Mr. P.C. Ghosh that the parallel P.C.C. came into being as a result of Mr. Mahtab and his following not having acted up to what had been decided by Sj. P.C. Ghosh regarding the election of the President and the office-bearers of the P.C.C. Such being the case, I regret to note that you entirely hold the members of the parallel P.C.C. responsible, for which remark every member of the parallel P.C.C. feels deeply aggrieved, and belittled in the eyes of the public. What is more painful is that Mr. Mahtab who was at the bottom of all these unpleasantness by standing in the way of Mr. Chowdhury being elected as the President of the P.C.C., has been given undue praise by saying Mr. Mahtab eased the situation by very generously offering to resign in favour of Mr. G. Chowdhuri.

It is further mentioned in your statement that those who formed the parallel P.C.C. never represented their grievances and took the law in their own hands. I beg to state that all through representations were made to the Congress President and, our grievances being unheeded, we were driven to the necessity of forming a separate body simply as a measure of self-defence.

Condemning one party and praising the other in the same tone makes every real Congress worker feel hurt.

I, therefore, request you to publish another statement in a manner which will bring solace and comfort to the hearts of the workers and also to remove the bad



impression created on the minds of the public by your statement. In the interest of the Congress work running smoothly and peacefully, I hope a word from you at an early date through the Associated Press will give them necessary impetus for whole-hearted work.

I request you will not misunderstand me for bringing the above facts to your notice and pray you will accept it in the spirit in which it is written.

Yours sincerely,  
Jagannath Misra  
Secretary, Ganjam D.C.C.

Rajendra Prasad  
Camp: Calcutta.

#### 24. *To Sri Krishna Sinha*

Sadaquat Ashram  
Patna  
9 April 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

I mentioned to you on the morning of the 6th April '38 the conversation I had with Rai Bahadur Shyam Nandan Sahay on the previous night. I am communicating to him the substance of the conversation we had in a letter, a draft of which I am enclosing for your consideration. As the matter is of importance and urgency I shall be obliged if you kindly let me have your views on the draft so that I may write to him. He is expecting an early reply from me. I am here till Monday next.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

*Enclosure:*

(Draft of letter addressed to Rai Bahadur Shyam Nandan Sahay)

Sadaquat Ashram  
Patna  
9 April 1938

My dear Babu Shyamnandan,

I had a talk with the Prime Minister regarding the matter we discussed in the train from Howrah. After much consideration our opinion is as follows:

(a) On the question of exemption from restoration of land sold since 1929 in execution of decree for arrears of cash rent which has not been enhanced since 1911, it seems impossible to devise a formula that would work satisfactorily. The tenants of the whole division of Chhotanagpur will be practically entirely deprived of the benefit of this clause, if the exemption is allowed. It is well known that there are large tracts in North Bihar and Bhagalpur divisions also which will share the same fate. A sliding scale of exemptions on the basis of the size of average holdings will be so complicated that it will be impracticable in working, because average size of holdings differs from district to district and even from sub-division to sub-division. It will be a fruitful source of litigation and whatever relief is given will be more than nullified by the litigation involved.

(b) On the question of devising machinery for quick realisation of rent, the matter is essentially for lawyers with experience of courts. The Government will be prepared to simplify the procedure reducing the expenditure and time taken in execution. For this purpose law officers will be ready to discuss any suggestions that may be made.

(c) As regards laying down some standard by which fair and equitable rent may be fixed under clause (e) of Sec. 112A of the Bihar Tenancy Act, it seems that this can be done in only general terms and must be left to a large extent to the officer charged with the duty of fixing such rent to determine it with reference to the condition of the land, its natural and other facilities, rent prevailing in the locality and similar other considerations. The Government will be prepared to discuss any suggestions that may be offered in this connection.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

25. *To Sri Krishna Sinha*

Sadaquat Ashram  
Patna  
9 April 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

Among the many reforms which deserve early attention is the question of the treatment of the so-called criminal tribes and the administration of the Criminal Tribes Act. There is no doubt that the administration of the Act requires looking into. Mr. A. V. Thakkar who has considerable experience of work in this line has written to me to request you to look into the matter. The U.P. & Bombay Governments have appointed Committees of Legislature to make necessary recommendations in the matter and they are at work. Your Government may also do the same or adopt some other measure for finding means for ameliorating

their condition. Mr. Thakkar writes that members of the so-called criminal tribes particularly *Doms* are subjected to much harassment, though a large majority of them have never been found guilty of any crime. May I request your attention to this matter?

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

## 26. To Sri Krishna Sinha

Sadaquat Ashram  
Patna  
9 April 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

You are aware that there is a general awakening amongst the aboriginal people of Chhotanagpur. Formerly those who had become Christians were keeping apart from all national movements and also from their non-Christian brethren. But recently there has come about a change and Christians and non-Christians are combining on a political platform. When I was at Delang I received a deputation led by Rai Sahib Bundi Ram of Ranchi. The deputation placed before me their views and demands. I am enclosing a copy for your information and consideration.

I would therefore suggest that you should start a separate portfolio to deal with the problem of aborigines and the scheduled castes. It is not necessary to have a separate Minister for this purpose but a separate portfolio to be put in charge of one of the Ministers who may take special interest in the matter is a necessity. One of the permanent & Parliamentary Secretaries may be associated to help the Minister. It will be the function of such Minister and Secretaries to consider the special problems affecting them, to devise means for their general uplift and to attend to and remove any special grievances they may have. I made this suggestion to you some time ago and it was made also by Mr. A. V. Thakkar when he visited the Province soon after you took office. But its importance and urgency came home to me with greater force than I had realised when I met the deputation and had a further talk with Mr. A. V. Thakkar at Delang.

As regards the particular points raised by the deputation, the following may be considered and satisfaction given on them:

- (a) [A number] of scholarships may be awarded to students of these classes at all stages of education—primary, secondary & college.
- (b) A boarding house under a Superintendent of their own community may be established at Ranchi for accommodating a fair number of students. No rent

- or low rent may be charged to encourage students to take advantage of it.
- (c) In primary schools teachers of their own community should be employed in ever-increasing numbers.
  - (d) They may be employed in public services for which they may be fitted by education, character and otherwise.
  - (e) The cases of two men in service, viz. A.T. Kujur and Tiju Bhagat may be considered.
  - (f) Agricultural farms to suit the requirements of Chhotanagpur. I understand there are such farms. These should be popularised as in other parts of the Province.
  - (g) Propaganda against drink.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Copy forwarded to Shri Krishna Ballabh Sahay for information.

Enclosure not included.

27. *From J.B. Kripalani*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Swaraj Bhawan  
Allahabad  
9th April 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

The Working Committee passed the following resolution with reference to the Bengalee-Beharee controversy. I am communicating to you the resolution. The office has already sent you all the relevant papers.

There were also some complaints from the Mussalmans of Bihar. The Committee's suggestion was that some special person may be appointed to look into the matter and report to you. No formal decision however was taken by the Committee on this question. It is only a suggestion and you may take it for what it is worth.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,  
J.B. Kripalani

RESOLUTION

Considered the representation on behalf of the domiciled Bengalee community

in Bihar. Resolved that the matter be referred to Babu Rajendra Prasad and he be requested to deal with it.

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram  
Patna.

28. *To Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar*

Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat  
Patna  
12th April 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

I have received a letter from the General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee communicating to me a resolution passed by the Working Committee on the representation of Mr. P.R. Das. I am forwarding herewith a copy of the representation and the resolution and shall be obliged if you please let me know what you have to say about the points raised in the representation, so that I may have a discussion with Mr. P.R. Das. I am here till the 15th or the 16th. The Working Committee of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee meets on the 15th. I should like to take up and finish the matter if possible before I leave after the Working Committee and I would not like to keep this matter pending for long.

An early reply is solicited.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Enclosure not included.

29. *To J.B. Kripalani*

Sadaquat Ashram  
Patna  
12th April 1938

My dear Kripalaniji,

I have received your letter dated 9th April 1938, communicating to me the resolution of the Working Committee regarding the representation from Mr.

P.R. Das. You also mention a representation made by Muslims but you have not sent it to me. I shall be obliged if you will kindly send me a copy of the representation and let me know who the party is so that I may get in touch with him.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

30. *From J.B. Kripalani*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Swaraj Bhawan  
Allahabad  
April 13, 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Thanks for your letter of the 12th instant. I found in my notes some mention of complaints made by the Muslims which were also to be referred to you. Of course nothing was received by this office. I do not remember exactly how that note is in my note book. It may be that the Maulana Sahib mentioned some complaints and said that these also be referred to you. However I do not think you need bother as there is nothing in our office which we can supply you.

How is your health? As you have not mentioned it, I take it you are doing well.

With pranams,

Yours sincerely,  
J.B. Kripalani

Shri Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat, Patna.

31. *To Jawaharlal Nehru*

Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat, Patna  
15 April 1938

My dear Jawaharlalji,

I have to seek your advice in regard to a matter. There are two young men named Messrs. Shaukat and Zaheer who are Lieutenants in the Army and are posted at Denapore these days. The former, Mr. Shaukat, is a son of Sir Sikandar Hayat of the Punjab. Both of them are young [and] have been in service for a short time. Shaukat came to me yesterday and said that he had decided to resign his Commission and to serve the country. On my asking for the reason he said

that he had seen Indians being insulted and ill-treated by Englishmen in the Army and he could not bear to see this. He further told me that he had been thinking over the matter for months and had made up his mind. I enquired if he had consulted his father. He said he had not done so and was not willing to consult him as he was sure he could not get his father's consent. He did not like to say no to his father and would not consult him before resigning. At my insistence he agreed to wait and see me today this afternoon. He came with his other friend, Mr. Zaheer, who is equally determined. They are sure that they would be cut off from their families and would not be dependent upon them for the support. They have no savings of their own and would have to depend on our organisation under which they might work. They have been in the Waziristan Campaign and have seen active service. I have tried to dissuade them from taking the final step lest they should do anything in a huff and then repent later on. But they are determined and ask my advice. Shaukat told me that his cousin who has recently joined the Congress is out of the family and his father does not even talk to him. He gets Rs.300 p.m. from his father apart from what he gets as his salary. He thinks his father will stop the allowance. They both say that they will not need much but will be content with simple fare such as we have in the Congress and they say that if they have no place in Bihar, they would go to some other Province. I assured them that if they persisted in their resolve and resigned, they would [be] welcome and we would share with them what we have in our Congress organisation. In short, I have tried my best to dissuade them but they are determined and want me to give my consent. They are not quite sure what they would do in the Congress but say that they will do whatever is entrusted to them and they would feel happy. I asked Shaukat if he would like me or permit me to talk to his father over the phone but he does not like it and says that he would simply communicate his decision to his father. I would like to have your advice on the matter. I had asked them to see me again on Sunday when I would finally give my advice after consulting you.

I shall be obliged for a reply per bearer, who will wait for it both as regards advice I should give them and as regards the work I may put them to.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

32. *From Jawaharlal Nehru*

Allahabad  
16 April 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu.

Your letter about Shaukat and Zaheer. I do not understand their haste and their reluctance to inform Sir Sikandar Hayat before the final step is taken. This

does not show strength of mind. If they cannot resist Sir Sikandar's wishes now, how will they be able to do so later?

Of course both of them will be welcome to the Congress and they should be told so. But the manner of their coming should be such as to cause the least resentment and should facilitate their future work, whatever this might be. If they suddenly resign today and are taken up by you tomorrow, this will lead to the impression that you have perhaps induced them to resign to put Sikandar Hayat in a false position. Then again what are they to do in the Congress after they resign? A young military officer is seldom fitted to do anything else and is peculiarly unfitted for public work. They have no such background or training. Again it is all very well for them to say that they will reduce their expenditure and live simply. Probably they have little idea of what this means. So far each of them must have been spending Rs.600 or so a month (adding the allowance from Sir Sikandar). It will be very difficult for them to reduce this standard to Congress limits. In any event it will be undesirable for the Congress to give them any allowance straight off after their resignation from the Army. This will be adversely criticised and will create a bad impression.

A mere negative dislike of any service may be good enough for resignation, but it will not take far in any positive work for the Congress. If they are really keen on doing Congress work then they must face the initial difficulties bravely—inform their father etc.—and take the final step after full deliberations and consultations. I do not for the moment see what they can do in Bihar or for that matter in the U.P. Perhaps they might be more useful in the Punjab but they will not like the idea of working there nor their fathers (one of Sikandar Hayat's) cousins has recently joined the Congress in the Punjab).

I think they must realise, if they have any sense, that a false and hurried step now will not be good for them or the Congress. Their obvious course is to inform Sir Sikandar, give him a little time, and then take the step. Even so, this step should not be followed immediately after by a formal engagement by the Congress. They should take their time, consult others. For instance, I shall be glad to meet them and discuss their future with them. They might see Mahmud also

If they have finally decided to resign without reference to Sir Sikandar then that is their lookout. This step should be taken without reference to the Congress and without any help from the Congress. They should be told of course that they will be welcomed in the Congress whenever they choose to come but this coming, to begin with, can only be as ordinary members. Nothing else should follow till a decent interval has passed. During this interval they can consult people and try to find out exactly what they can do.

I wanted to find out from Ashraf if he knew these young men but Ashraf has gone to the city and is not available at present.

I do think that you should not engage them in any Congress activity immediately after resignations, should they resign now. Besides, I do not suppose resignations from the Army take effect immediately. This will take time and Sir



Sikandar will get to know and bring pressure to bear upon them. If they are unable to withstand this pressure then the resignation might be withdrawn. If you have any commitment, you might then be placed in a false position.

As for the work they might be asked to do, I can make no suggestion whatever. I should like to meet them. Is it possible for them to come to Allahabad? I shall be here till the 23rd night and shall then go to Lucknow for two or three days.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

### 33. To Maharajadhiraja Sir Kameshwar Singh

Sadaquat Ashram  
Patna  
20 April 1938

My dear Maharajadhiraja Bahadur,

After much discussion and a great deal of deliberation we have managed to come to an understanding on many points relating to Tenancy Law and the Agricultural Income Tax Bill. Speaking from the point of view of the large body of tenants and the Government which are affected by the understanding, I feel I have taken a very heavy responsibility on myself and I have no doubt I shall come in for a great deal of criticism from not only the Kisan Sabha but Congressmen in general and even perhaps from our High Command. But I have taken the responsibility. I have no doubt you on your side have similar difficulties. More important than the law is its administration; more important than the understanding is the way in which it is given effect to. I am anxious that the tension that now subsists should be eased and the people at large made to feel that they have got some relief as a result of the understanding. I suggest that the following steps may be taken without delay:

(1) A statement should be issued and widely circulated under the signature of prominent and leading Zamindars in which the following points may be made clear:

(a) All abuses and illegal exactions should cease, e.g. no Zamindar or his *amla* should realise anything in excess of the legally ascertained rent and cess. No *abwab* in any form should be realised. Amongst the *abwabs* whose number is legion—I came across some sixty forms of it in Champaran during Mahatma Gandhi's Enquiry in 1917—the principal ones should be mentioned specifically.

(b) Tenants should not be compelled to sell any articles without price or at less than the market price, e.g. oil, ghee, milk, dahi, vegetables, shoes, bamboo baskets, earthen pots, goats, young buffaloes, etc.

(c) No payments should be accepted without grant of a receipt in the prescribed form.

(d) Tenants should not be required to render any service without wages or at less than the prevalent wages, e.g. Hari, begari, should not be demanded.

negotiations that came to a head on the 19th April 1938. There is great resentment in the Party and there is strong feeling against all that we have tried to accomplish, and this resentment is felt not only by the so-called left-wingers but even by the moderate elements. We are charged with having brought about a settlement which is one-sided and which makes concessions that cannot be defended before the public. Sri Babu had to face a very angry and ugly meeting two or three days ago as a result of which consideration of some amendment had to be postponed. I met the members of the Party last night. Some members did not attend—I do not know whether on purpose or because they were out of town. Two points were suggested for reconsideration and I would request you to give them the weight they deserve and relieve the situation if you can.

It is felt regarding the restoration of *nilami bakhasht* lands that the exemption in favour of "petty landlords" nullifies to a considerable extent the effect of the provision for restoration. In some areas we have got only what may be termed "petty landlords" as defined by us, and in those places there will be no restoration at all, if the landlord keeps the entire land in his *khas* cultivating possession. It is also pointed out that if a "petty landlord" is a co-sharer with a big landlord in a village, cases will arise when our tenant may get his land restored and a neighbouring one may not, and this may happen when the tenant so deprived may be the more deserving from every point of view. This will create much heart-burning. To minimise the effect of this anomaly it has been suggested that the definition of "petty landlord" as a landlord who is "exempted from the payment of Agricultural Income Tax" should be deleted and substituted by "a landlord who pays Rs. 125 or less annually on account of Road Cess". This does not touch the question of exemption in the Agricultural Income Tax Bill but only for the purposes of the Bakhasht Bill a somewhat lower limit of income for getting exemption from the clause.

There is much feeling against a flat rate of income tax for all incomes above 1 lac in the Agricultural Income Tax Bill. It is said and with much force that concession has been given to bigger landlords at the cost of smaller ones and it is suggested that the rates should be raised so as to raise the upper limit and reduce the rates for lower incomes subject to the condition that the total yield should not be reduced. Rai Bahadur Shyam Nandan Sahay had suggested a scheme on the 19th putting the higher limit at 3 annas in the rupee and considerably reducing the lower rates; we did not accept it as the lower rates were reduced to such an extent that the yield would have been very greatly affected. You can work out, if you agree, a scheme on the same lines keeping the total yield untouched.

I am writing this as I find the situation very tense and I shall be obliged if you could talk matters over with the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister and see if a way out can be found. I am going away for reasons of health and hope that will make no difference in the consideration of the matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

35. *From Chandreshwar Singh*

Rijwan  
26 April 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I am in receipt of your letter of yesterday and have called Shyam Nandan Babu. I saw Prime Minister and Finance Minister last night and Shyam Nandan Babu will see them this morning. I am very sorry to learn of your indisposition again but I do not wonder at the same. In this heat if you do what you have been doing anybody will break. We do not quite appreciate why our Indian leaders cannot give themselves more rest and therefrom prolonged service to us.

Wishing you to have complete rest and with pranams,

Yours sincerely,  
Chandreshwar Singh

36. *To Sri Krishna Sinha*

Birla Sanatorium  
Nasik Road  
May 1, 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

One problem has arisen on account of introduction of prohibition in Saran which requires consideration. When I went to inaugurate the campaign in Saran we were stopped on the way by [a] large crowd of Pasis who have lost the trade. I subsequently met individuals who complained that Pasis were starving and needed help. I anticipated this kind of trouble and suggested soon after your Ministry came into power that people should be trained in the art of making gur out of palm trees. [A] scheme was submitted on behalf of the All India V.I. Association to Dr. Mahmud long long ago and I had talked with him as well as with the Excise Minister on more than one occasion. Dr. Mahmud seemed to be nervous as he feared that this might ultimately injure the sugar industry. I have no such fear and if you can get all gur that we need out of palm trees without utilising any of the cultivable land for growing sugarcane it will be a matter for no regret but for congratulation. We have about a crore of palm trees in the Province of which only about 25 lacs are tapped for toddy purposes. If we could tap only as many as are tapped today we may be able to give employment to all Pasis in the Province, of whom 12 to 15 thousand have become unemployed in the district of Saran. But this requires a little training [for] a few weeks. I had arranged with the Bengal Branch of A.I.V.I.A. to train our men in gur-making. But nothing was done to send anyone for this training. If you could get some

Pasis trained or a few better class men, we could have centres opened in the Province to train them locally. A trained Pasi could take on lease as many trees as he can tap and convert the juice into gur in his own home. It will not require anything except a few earthen pots like those which he uses for drawing toddy and iron *karah* like the one used for making gur from sugarcane juice. Some experiments had been made by Sjt. Jaglal Choudhary before he became a Minister. He found that gur could not sell on account of high cost of production. But there were, I believe, some reasons for that. Pasis were employed on high salary for tapping and did as little as they could. I, therefore, want this to be done as a purely cottage industry. We could find some agency to purchase the gur and get it converted into *misry* which is supposed to have great medicinal properties and is prescribed by physicians for the lungs diseases. You will be surprised to learn that much of the *misry* which passes off as *tal misry* is imported from Japan and is not *tal misry* at all. There is great room for *tal misry* and I suppose it is an industry which should be encouraged and incidentally the Pasis will be given an occupation. I hope this will receive your earnest attention and something will be done. I also spoke to you to see if *khas mahal* lands were available and could be settled with Pasis in Saran. I hope the matter has not escaped your attention and something has been done for them. I have received a letter from Dr. Raghunandan Prasad requesting me to do something for the unemployed Pasis. I am asking him to approach you and I hope you would do something.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

P.S. It seems the meeting of Parliamentary Sub-Committees and the Prime Ministers is now definitely fixed to take place at Bombay on the 12th May and subsequent days. I hope you will be coming. I am so near Bombay that I cannot avoid attending the meeting. I do not know when you would stay in Bombay. If you like I will arrange with Mr. Rameshwardas Birla with whom I will be staying in Bombay. Please let me know.

Rajendra Prasad

37. To Dr. Raghunandan Prasad

Birla Sanatorium  
P.O. Nasik Road  
1st May 1938.

My dear Dr. Raghunandan Prasad,

I have received your letter regarding unemployment which has arisen amongst the Pasis on account of introduction of prohibition in Saran. When I was at

Chapra, some Pasis met me and mentioned the same fact to me. I had a talk with the Excise Superintendent of Chapra and also with the Excise Minister at Patna. I suggested that land in *khas mahal* might be settled with Pasis to enable them to become agriculturists. I believe there is land available in the *khas mahal* of Saran and this might open an avenue of employment to them. In my speech in Saran I appealed to the public to give them employment wherever possible and I know that in some places some settlements have been made with them in bazaars. But there is also an opening of employment in Saran which they might take advantage of. A new railway line is going to be constructed between Sonepur and Chapra and presumably many labourers will be required. Pasis might seek employment there also.

The original scheme of gur-making that I had is still untried. But I have no doubt that it is capable of employing all Pasis who have been thrown out of jobs and many more as well. It does not require any big outlay and can easily be effected if some people are trained in the art and then the centre is opened in Bihar. I suggested this in August or September last but unfortunately it has not yet been given effect to. I suppose the training will not require more than a month or so and all the implements that will be required will be a few earthen pots like those which are used by the Pasis at present and iron *karah* like what is used for preparing gur from cane juice. Every Pasi could take settlement of as many trees as he could tap and convert the juice into gur in his own house. No capital will be required and I believe the gur will have a ready sale. I spoke to Dr. Mahmud once again but he seemed to think that we could not take it up as it would compete with sugarcane gur. I do not agree with this and in no case there is danger of any house competition for a pretty long time to come. But for some reason or other, the Industries Department has not taken kindly to this suggestion and nothing has been done. This season is practically gone but I believe it will not be too late even now to start the training so that the work may be started in the next season. We might possibly have some experiment even in this season also to find out whether gur so prepared could sell in the market. Will you please speak to the Prime Minister and other Ministers to have something done? I suppose if the Industries Department is not in a position to finance any scheme for the training of Pasis in gur-making it could be done out of the funds allotted for propaganda work in connection with prohibition and it should be done immediately so that experience may be gained in this season to be utilised in the next. I believe there are about one crore of [palm] trees in the Province of which only about 25 lacs are tapped for toddy. Even if the same number of trees continue to be tapped they will kill unemployment of all Pasis. But there is no reason why some trees should not be tapped. I therefore suggest that this should be taken in hand and you should speak to the Ministers to give effect to without any delay. I am writing separately.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

## 38. To Gopikishore Lal

Birla Sanatorium  
P.O. Nasik Road  
May 4, 1938

My dear Gopi,

I want to give you some trouble about a departmental work and I hope you will not mind it. I do not know the conditions [in] which the estates are taken under the management of the Court of Wards. I know of one or two families which are in great difficulties and if their estates could be taken charge of by the Court of Wards, there is a chance of saving them. Otherwise they are faced with utter ruin. If the proprietors were minors or in any way otherwise disabled it would be easy enough, but unfortunately they are not and the only ground for approaching the Government is mismanagement and the fact that the estates are involved in debt. I wonder if something can be done to save them. In both cases they are minor boys whose interests are involved. But they are not the only proprietors. I shall be obliged if you kindly help in the matter and on hearing from you I will give you further details, as I am very keen for personal and public reasons that they should be saved. I would, therefore, request you to suggest some way of getting the thing done.

Bihar Tenancy Amendment Bill was passed some time ago. One year was given from 10th March for making applications for reduction of rents. When I visited Chapra I heard that no officers have been appointed to receive the applications and there is also a complaint that the details which a tenant was expected to furnish as regards the number and the date of the enhancement proceedings and such other things could not be furnished by the tenants without incurring much expense and undergoing much trouble. I spoke to the Prime Minister and suggested that the application form might be revised with a view to simplifying it and to make arrangement that information which could be got from the Government record or from Civil Courts should not be required from the tenants. I do not know if anything has been done in the matter. As nearly two months have already elapsed out of 12 months given for making application something must be done immediately. The relief which has been given by the Act should actually reach the tenants and it should reach as quickly as possible. I think a great deal depends upon your department and may I request you to consider the matter and do what you can? I am here for some time and shall be obliged for an early reply.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

After the above was written this post has brought all the four volumes of the *Evidence and Memoranda to the Royal Commission on Labour in India*.

Many thanks.

Rajendra Prasad

*39. From Dr. Syed Mahmud, Minister of Education, Bihar*

Patna  
4 May 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I got your letter this morning. I am laid up with fever for the last three days and I am dictating this letter from my sick-bed. I shall be alright within a day or two. It is only a philarial fever.

Some people have already been trained in making gur out of palm juice, and some of them have been teaching it in different parts of the Province. I sent one man to Samastipur at the request of Babu Girvardhar Singh. He taught many people there satisfactorily and Babu Girvardhar Singh was extremely pleased and wrote to me about the satisfaction which the work has given to that locality. I will take it up seriously now. I shall discuss it tomorrow or day after with the Agriculture as well as Industries Department. I still adhere to my previous view that ultimately it will cause over-production and will help nobody. We shall be arousing hopes among Pasis without giving them any real benefit. But this is however my own view. You say you do not share this view. I shall, therefore, obey your orders and carry on instructions. I have already done something, but of course not on a very large scale. People from the department are training in different areas of the Province, but of course on a very limited scale.

For some time past I have been deeply thinking over the question of agricultural improvement in the Province. I held a conference a few days ago and I send you herewith under a separate cover a copy of my speech. I think we should pay more attention to agriculture than anything else. Please let me know your views. The conference passed a series of resolutions which are at present being examined by a committee of 15 persons, mostly non-officials, and after they have formulated their own scheme I shall send a copy to you. But you will find an indication of each and everything in my speech. I should like to hear your views.

How are you? I hope you are doing well.

Yours sincerely,  
Syed Mahmud

Babu Rajendra Pd.  
Birla Sanatorium  
Nasik Road  
(Dist. Nasik).

Enclosure not included.

40. *From Govind Ballabh Pant*

Naini Tal  
May 6, 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

You might have received my last letter. We have since received the heartening news of the cancellation of his leave by the Governor of Orissa. The British Government and their agents have a queer way of settling even small matters they could have with grace made amends for their original blunder at an earlier stage, but instead they obstinately stuck to their plans up to the very last, but finding it difficult to resist the Congress they were ultimately forced to give in. However, that is hardly our concern. It is enough for us that the crisis has once more been tided over. Step by step we thus gain further strength and it is not unreasonable to hope that if we can keep our organisation strong and clean we will become altogether irresistible within a short time in spite of the odds that we have to face almost continuously.

I have, however, been drawn away from the main purpose with which I had started this letter. I have just received an advance copy of a letter from the Railway Department of the Government of India in reply to my suggestion for the appointment of a tribunal for settling the claims of the victims and sufferers of the Bihta disaster which I enclose for your perusal. I need not discuss it further as I expect to meet you in Bombay in about a week and this will be one of the many subjects on which I will seek your advice.

Trust you are steadily improving. With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,  
G.B. Pant

*Enclosure:*

(Copy of letter from the Railway Department, Government of India)

Railway Department  
(Railway Board)  
Simla  
April 1938

My dear Hussain,

With reference to your D.O. No. 30-R of the 19th instant, conveying the United Provinces Government's suggestion for the constitution of a tribunal to deal with claims for compensation for any injury arising out of the railway accident near Bihta, I am desirous to say that the East Indian Railway initiated action several months ago to obtain detailed information in order to determine



the amount of compensation to be paid. The various Provincial Governments concerned were asked to instruct District Magistrates to assist the Railway Administration in getting such information as was relevant to the principles normally followed in the settlement of similar claims. It is presumed that there is no suggestion that any other principle should be adopted in this case.

With a view to ensuring prompt and adequate attention being given to the large number of claims that must be investigated in this case, a special organisation has been set up at the Headquarters office of the East Indian Railway and the Government of India have no reason to believe that the Railway Administration, in their negotiations with the various parties concerned, would endeavour to arrive at any settlement other than that which would be fair and equitable, having regard to all relevant considerations. In the circumstances, it does not appear to be necessary to appoint a tribunal of the nature suggested by the United Provinces Government.

Yours sincerely,  
B.L. Cameron

41. *From Gopikishore Lal*

Patna  
The 6th May 1938

My dear Rajendra,

Your letter of the 4th instant to hand.

Regarding the Court of Wards matter, I enclose a copy of section 6 of the Court of Wards Act, which lays down the conditions in which an estate can be taken up under management. Clause (e) may be applicable to cases referred to by you. In their application, the applicants may lay stress on the fact that they have not been able to manage the estates properly and they are in fact disqualified for the purpose. The present Government are a bit liberal in taking estates under management and I would advise the particular proprietors to take their chance by applying to the Hon'ble the Prime Minister direct. The fact that the estate is involved in indebtedness would not be a ground by itself for being taken under the Court of Wards, but it can be utilised as a ground to show that the proprietors were unable to manage their estate properly and were disqualified for it. Recently Government have agreed to take under management the estate of Raja Deoki Nandan Prasad Singh on more or less similar grounds.

Regarding the action to be taken under the new Bihar Tenancy Amendment Act, I enclose herewith, for your information, a copy of letter which has been sent to all Collectors. Leaflets in Hindi and Urdu are being printed in the Government Press and would be circulated broadcast through thana officers and local

Congress organisations with a view to expedite the filing of these applications. In the leaflet it has also been particularly mentioned that in case any raiyat is unable to fill up all the columns of the form, particularly about the case number, all he need do is to give the year in which the enhancement or commutation was done, and the case number etc. would be filled up from the records available in the court. We are trying to expedite matters and we hope that the raiyats would get the necessary relief very soon.

Yours sincerely,  
Gopikishore Lal

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
Birla Sanatorium  
P.O. Nasik Road.

*Enclosure 1:*

#### COURT OF WARDS ACT, 1879

6. *Disqualified proprietors.* Proprietors of estates shall be held disqualified to manage their own property when they are

- (a) females declared by the Court incompetent to manage their own property;
- (b) persons declared by the Court to be minors;
- (c) persons adjudged by a competent Civil Court to be of unsound mind, and incapable of managing their affairs;
- (d) persons adjudged by a competent Civil Court to be otherwise rendered incapable by physical defects or infirmities of managing their own property;
- (e) persons as to whom the Court has declared, on their own application, that they are disqualified, and that it is expedient in the public interest that their estates should be managed by the Court.

*Enclosure 2:*

(Copy of letter from Rai Bahadur A.G.K. Lal, B.A., Secretary to Government, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Bihar, dated Patna, the 1st May 1938)

Patna  
1 May 1938

Sir,

I am directed to address the Board on the subject of the disposal of applications under section 112A of the Bihar Tenancy Act in the different districts of Bihar proper.

2. Government are very anxious that arrangements be made for the disposal of all applications under section 112A, particularly under sub-clauses (a) and (b) of section 112A(1), as expeditiously as possible.

3. The Bihar Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1937, has been brought into force with effect from the 10th March 1938 and the rules framed thereunder have also been published in the Bihar Gazette in its issue of the 9th March.

4. A notification reducing the Court fees on applications by raiyats under sub-clauses (a) and (b) of section 112A(1) to four annas and another notification vesting all Subdivisional Officers with the powers of a Collector under section 112A are being issued soon.

5. It will be open to a raiyat to apply for relief under any of the sub-clauses (a) to (d) of section 112A(1).

6. The period of limitation for application under sub-clauses (a) and (b) of section 112A(1) is one year, but it is very desirable that all such applications are filed as early as possible so that the officer taking up those applications may have the facility of arranging his programme for the disposal of those applications locally thana by thana. I am to say that the Collectors may be requested to distribute printed leaflets in Hindi and Urdu through Thana Officers and local Congress organisations explaining very briefly the provision of sub-clauses (a) and (b) and (c), and stating that although the period of limitation for applications under (a) and (b) is one year, the raiyats desirous of applying under these sub-clauses or under sub-clause (e) should do so as early as possible. Sufficient copies of leaflets in Hindi and Urdu are being forwarded to the Collector of each district direct. He should be requested to distribute these leaflets immediately and then to fix dates at each thana centre of which notice may be given to each village in the thana by beat of drum and through Choukidars—on which applications may be received on his behalf by officers deputed by him to each thana centre for the purpose. These dates should not be earlier than 8 or 10 days after the leaflets have been distributed. Three days at each thana may do. If the last Saturday of May and the Sunday following be utilised for the purpose it may be possible for the Collector to depute most of his officers (including Sub-Registrars if necessary) to collect these applications at different centres. Attempt must be made to receive all applications by the 1st week of June at the latest.

7. The number of officers required to dispose of these applications will depend on the number of applications filed or likely to be filed in each district. It is very likely that in most of the districts the Collectors will require additional officers for the disposal of these applications. If assuming that the bulk of applications to be filed under sub-clauses (a) and (b) will have been filed by the end of May next, the Collectors should be able to make an estimate of the additional officers required for the disposal of such applications. Given an adequate staff of ministerial officers, it is estimated that an officer should be able to dispose of 1,100 applications a month, if not more. The Collectors may therefore be requested to report in the 1st week of June the number of officers and the additional ministerial staff required by them for the disposal of such

applications. The same officer would also take up applications filed under other sub-clauses of section 112A(1) unless the number of applications under any other sub-clause is so large that additional officers may be necessary for their disposal. In the meantime the Collectors may be requested to nominate such officer or officers in their existing staff for being vested with powers of a Collector under section 112A whom they consider suitable for the work.

8. The Board is requested to report by the middle of June at the latest the number of additional officers and the staff required in each district for the disposal of applications under section 112A and an estimate of the additional expenditure involved and how it can be met.

9. The officers in each district will work directly under the Collector. But on account of the multifarious other duties of the Collectors it may not be possible for them to exercise the extent of supervision over the work of these officers as may be necessary. It is also likely that the Collectors may themselves stand in need of expert advice on some matters arising out of the proceedings under section 112A. It is also very desirable that the principle and procedure followed in different districts should be uniform. To ensure this, it is contemplated that there should be an officer of the rank of a Collector with considerable Revenue experience whose duty roughly will be

- (a) to watch the progress of work in each district,
- (b) to inspect the work of the officers in each district, and
- (c) to give necessary advice to the Collectors after personal discussions where necessary.

The officer will work directly under the Member of the Board of Revenue.

10. There is a proposal to take up a general settlement of fair rent under section 85 of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act in the district of Palamau. When this starts the same officer may be appointed the Settlement Officer for the operations in Palamau. As the work in the district of Palamau is not likely to take up all his time it should be possible for him to look after the operations under section 112A in other districts in addition to his duties in respect of Palamau.

11. If the Board agree with the above proposals it is required to nominate an officer for the purpose and to suggest a suitable designation for him. It is suggested for the consideration of the Board that Mr. Williams may carry on the work until the return of Mr. Houlton from leave when the latter takes over from the former.

12. A copy of this letter with sufficient copies of leaflets is being forwarded direct to each Collector and to the Commissioners of the Bhagalpur, Tirhut and Patna Divisions.

13. A copy of the leaflet will be sent to the Board as soon as it is printed.

I have the honour to be, Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
(Sd.)

Secretary to Government

Copy forwarded to the Commissioner of the Patna/Tirhut/Bhagalpur Divn. and Collectors of Patna, Gaya, Shahabad, Saran, Champaran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Monghyr, Bhagalpur, and Purnea, for information.

2. His particular attention is invited to paragraphs 6 and 7 of the letter.

3. Copies of leaflet in Hindi and Urdu will follow.

Para 2 [applicable] to Collectors only.

42. *From M. Asaf Ali*

CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY CONGRESS PARTY

Room No. 20  
Council House  
New Delhi  
7th May 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I enclose herewith a statement which I have issued to the Press. To my mind it is a matter of urgent importance that the Working Committee should issue a comprehensive resolution regarding their policy relating to India's defence. From all the news which I have been carefully noting, I gather that the redistribution of British forces in connection with the defence of the Empire may easily result in further heavy liabilities for India. Nothing short of intensive agitation throughout the country will restrain and restrict the increase of our financial burden in respect of the changes contemplated by the War Office. I, with other colleagues in the Assembly, have kept many of these questions to the fore; but it is not enough. The country and the Press should devote much more attention to these questions.

Our demands should include:

1. Complete control of India's defence forces and problems through the Central Legislature.
2. Clear repudiation of all liability for the maintenance of British troops kept in India for purely Imperial purposes.
3. They maintain that 1/3 of the British forces in India are maintained for *internal security*. If the Provinces clearly repudiate this liability, we can claim either the entire evacuation of British troops; or if they are maintained for imperial purposes, (a) no financial liability for them, but (b) some compensation for using India as a base in the Imperial scheme of defence.

I have worked out all the relevant financial details with different alternatives.

which I shall place before you whenever necessary.

I beg to remain,

Yours sincerely,  
Asaf Ali  
Honorary Secretary

*Enclosure:*

(Copy of statement issued by M. Asaf Ali)

Questions of internal importance even when they are of passing, though topical, interest generally so exclusively engage the public attention in India that problems of vital importance arising out of international developments do not seem to produce more than mild ripples of interest. The Indo-British Trade talks for instance claim more than their due share of interest while urgent problems of defence which are the subject of discussion between the India and War Offices in England, and which may affect India's liabilities in several directions quite vitally, do not receive even that attention which the cloves of Zanzibar or the political crisis in Orissa or a communal riot or some such issue of local interest may arouse. During the last three years and a half the Congress Party in the Central Legislature has done much to focus public attention on our defence and external affairs because the measure of their comprehension and control will be the measure of India's independence. It is, therefore, a matter of the gravest concern to the country that the point of view of the Congress in this respect should be stated with clarity and precision by the Working Committee at its next meeting in order that those who are dealing with these questions in England at present should come to their decision with the full knowledge of how they are viewed by those who may some day have to deal with these problems. Questions relating to the defence and the external affairs of any country are so closely connected that the policy of a country's external relations is determined by the state of its defence and vice versa. The requirements of India's defence are determined today not by the country's requirements but by Great Britain's foreign policy which in its turn is subject to the European or world situation from time to time owing to England's extensive liabilities. The consideration of the defence of the British Empire has at present arisen out of the ambitions of Italy, Germany and Japan. India is perhaps one of the most important links in the Imperial defence scheme but her share of the burden, which is wholly unrelated to her own requirements, is utterly disproportionate to any conceivable responsibility which India may be supposed to bear. One-third of the entire British forces which occasion four times the financial burden of an equal number of Indian troops are stationed in India primarily and, I maintain, entirely for Imperial purposes. This means nearly doubling the expenditure on our normal defence force. There is not the slightest justification for penalising India for her present connection with the British Empire, particularly when she is deprived of

her independence in the bargain, and has no control over her own armies and further when England pleads inability to protect the Indian nationals' rights even in the Dominions and Colonies. The whole thing is a colossal imposition for which there is no moral, constitutional or any conceivable justification unless the world must always submit to brute force which is not the way of so-much-talked-about peace.

The Working Committee of the Congress, in my opinion, should bestir themselves betimes to influence the decisions which the British War Office will be taking in the course of the next 5 or 6 weeks. It is equally essential that the Congress demand should not proceed merely on the ground of sentiment but should be formulated in strict accordance with the requirements of stern realities.

M. Asaf Ali

43. *From Jaipal Singh*

Rajkumar College  
Raipur  
Central Provinces  
June 11th, 1938

Dear Babu Rajendra Prasad,

I shall be grateful of your help to get me an appointment in my native Province, Bihar. I have recently returned from British West Africa where I was in the Colonial Service but for domestic reasons I had to resign from the Service. As the only Chhotanagpuria to have received an education abroad and as one who has done so much for the athletic prestige of India, I feel I am entitled to your generous consideration. While I am particularly interested in educational work I shall be willing to take any administrative position.

Mr. C.F. Andrews has known me for a good many years and he had an opportunity of seeing my work when he visited the Gold Coast only three years ago. I had the privilege of helping him produce one of his books. I know he must have told you about me when you were in charge of the Bihar Earthquake Fund to which I helped to send contributions from Achimota and the Gold Coast Indians.

I enclose a copy of my antecedents which I am forwarding to the Minister for Education also. I sincerely hope you will see that I am appointed.

Yours truly,  
Jaipal Singh

Enclosure not included.

44. *To Syed Mahmud, Minister of Education, Bihar*

Wardha  
June 20, 1938

My dear Dr. Mahmud,

After [a] somewhat serious illness I am just able to attend to some urgent correspondence again. I have received a letter from Mr. Jaipal Singh, M.A. (Oxford), who was the captain of the Indian Hockey Team which won world championship in the year 1928. The team was much talked about at the time. You will be agreeably surprised, as I have been, to learn that he belongs to our Province and wants a suitable job in the Education Department. It has struck me that we need to encourage physical culture amongst our youth. I know that some Provinces have got separate departments or at any rate officers in charge of physical culture. I do [not] know if we have any such department or officer. Mr. Jaipal Singh appears to be a suitable person to take charge of a department like this. The matter is important enough to require a new start even if there is no such department in existence now. Mr. Jaipal Singh would be a suitable person for the Education Department otherwise also. I understand that he has already sent you a copy of his testimonials and has written for a suitable post.

I shall be obliged to hear from you about this at an early date.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

45. *To Jaipal Singh (Jalpahar, North Bengal)*

Wardha  
June 20, 1938

My dear Mr. Jaipal Singh,

I am glad to receive your letter. I was not aware till I received it that you belong to our Province. I had of course heard about your achievements in the world of sports. It has given me much pleasure to receive this letter from you and I shall do what I can to take advantage of your services for the Province. I am not quite [able] to understand what will suit you best, and I shall be obliged to know something more about you and your connection with our Province. In the meantime I am going to write to the Hon'ble the Minister of Education to find out if there is anything in the nature of Department of Physical Culture in our Province and whether it will be possible to give you a suitable post in that Department. I wonder if this suggestion of mine to the Minister has your approval.



As I have not been keeping good health I shall be staying here for some time. Please write to me here.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

46. *From Dr. Syed Mahmud*

Patna

22nd June 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I got your letter today. Many thanks for the same. I had been thinking to write to you for some time past, but I did not do so deliberately to avoid giving you any trouble whatsoever. I am glad you are better now and pray to God you may completely recover soon. There is no separate Department for Physical Culture. There is, I understand, an Officer of Physical Culture. I shall go into the matter fully in July and then let you know.

I am going to Simla on the 25th to attend the Sub-Committee meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education to discuss [the] Wardha scheme and also [the] Governing Body meeting of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, and therefore I will have no time to go into this matter before my return from Simla. In the meantime please ask Mr. Jaipal Singh to write to me early in July and tell me all about his qualifications.

I am very much concerned about the fate of the Education Reorganisation Committee. You have resigned from it and of course it will be extremely selfish on my part to ask you not to do so. Your health is of more importance than any other work. I have received no letter from Prof. K.T. Shah. He is reaching Bombay on the 28th of June. He again begs of me to relieve him on grounds of his eye trouble. It is no doubt true that his eyes are bad and after the operation doctors must have asked him not to use [them]. He also in his letter mentions of other difficulties some of which you already know. I am sure on his arrival in Bombay when he hears of your resignation he will further insist on me to be relieved. Please write to him "8, Labarnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay" asking him not [to] do so. He may take up the work in August and finish it in two months. Without him and you the committee will lose all its importance and I feel doubtful whether it will be able to do any useful work at all.

Then there is the question of Chairman of the Vernacular Committee. We had decided that Maulana may be requested to accept the Chairmanship, but as I could not get an opportunity of getting this decision confirmed by you again I have not yet announced. But now it seems your retirement from that Committee also will be compulsory. Is it so? May I announce Maulana's name as the Chairman?

I have taken up rural development scheme and am considering your scheme in all its bearings. I generally agree with what you say, but here and there I have my own views which I will let you know in a few days. They are matters of detail.

I have also been doing something about agriculture. A scheme has been prepared and we held a conference which was largely attended. Herewith I send you a copy of my speech at the Agricultural Conference.

Mass literacy campaign is going on very well so far. I am thinking hard how to make it permanent. You will be glad to hear that practically every nook and corner of the Province has taken it up in a marvellous spirit of service.

With kind regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Syed Mahmud

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
C/o Seth Jamnalal Bajaj  
Wardha (C.P.).

Enclosure not included.

47. *To Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Minister of Local Self-Government, Bihar, Patna*

TOWN CONGRESS COMMITTEE, DARBHANGA

Lalbagh  
23 June 1938

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith the following resolution of the Darbhanga Town Congress Committee which was passed at its meeting held on 29th May 1938 for your information and perusal:

Resolved that the Darbhanga Town Congress Committee recommends to the Government and the District Congress Committee that the following persons be nominated on the Municipal Board of Darbhanga as Municipal Commissioners on behalf of the Government: 1. B. Baroda Charan; 2. B. Lakshmi Rout; 3. B. Thaggu Dusadh; 4. B. Raghunandan Prasad; 5. B. Kapileshwar Prasad Sinha; 6. Shrimati Vidyavati Devi, M.A.

I have the honour to be, Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
Rajendra Prasad  
President

Forwarded to Pt. Binodanand Jha, Parliamentary Secretary, L.S.G.  
A.N.S., 25-6-38

48. From Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Minister of Finance, Bihar

Patna

6th July 1938

My dear Sir,

I am sorry I could not reply earlier to your last letter as well as the one before it on account of very great pressure of work. Maulana Sahib was here on the 4th and 5th and he was able to solve the tangle which the attitude of the Zamindars in the Assembly on the last day of the session had created. A serious point of difference arose between us and the landlords as to who should be described as habitual defaulter. The Zamindars at last accepted the point of view which we urged but they did so only after Maulana had come and argued with them on the point with the result that the last stage of the legislation had to be considerably delayed. This has rendered the position a little more difficult as we would not be able to give effect to the *bakhast* clause at this stage of the new cultivating year. However, you will know the details later on.

As for your letter which you have sent along with the cuttings from the *Times of India* and the *Hitavada*, I can only say that there is nothing of importance just now to justify any insinuation of the nature referred to in the cuttings. So far as I am aware, there has been no appointment which can be challenged on ground of nepotism or jobbery. It is true that for some time the question of managership of Bettiah Raj loomed large before the public mind and it did create certain amount of acrimony and discontent of which you are fully aware. It has left some bad impression behind it. There was a time when the Prime Minister misunderstood me because I took up the cause of Bipin Babu in preference to that of Babu Paras Nath on ground both of his suitability and popularity in the district and his connection with the people thereof. I am sure Sri Babu has not entirely forgotten it but he is now behaving in a manner which leads me to think that, at least outwardly, there is no trace of the acrimony left on his mind. That formed the subject matter of discussion in all circles including the officials. Beyond that I know nothing which might be referred to as an instance of difference between ourselves. I had a talk with Murali Babu and he instanced a few cases which weighed with him while writing that article. I have asked him to send you a full note for your information confidentially. I trust he will do it. At the present moment there does not seem to be any cloud in the sky and the atmosphere is clearing up. We are meeting on the 9th and 10th in the Working Committee to review the past and I feel confident that whatever misunderstanding there may have existed between the Ministers and the Congress Executive will be cleared up.

We are sorry to know that it will not be possible for you to work as Chairman or member of the various committees with which you have been associated. I think it is better that you take complete rest for some time and may have no responsibility whatsoever. We shall discuss this matter at length on the 9th instant and convey to you our desire. I am very much better now though I am still

in the hospital. I intend leaving it on the 10th. I am walking with difficulty and with the help of crutch, and I get soon tired. Nevertheless, I am doing my full share of work and have often to work at a stretch from morning till night. Everything else is quite all right.

Trusting this finds you in good health,

I remain,  
Yours affectionately,  
A.N. Sinha

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
P.O. Wardhaganj, C.P.

49. *To Dr. Syed Mahmud*

Wardha  
July 9, 1938

My dear Dr. Mahmud,

I am herewith forwarding to you schemes for the introduction of the Wardha Scheme on a small scale in our Province for your consideration and adoption. They have been prepared here after consultation with those who are engaged in working out similar schemes and am forwarding them to you for your consideration and adoption in our Province. I need hardly say that as it is an altogether new experiment we should do all we can to give to it a fair trial, and we cannot do better than adopting the suggestions of those who have devoted much thought and attention to work out [these] details. I, therefore, hope that this scheme will receive your due consideration. There is one thing which I cannot emphasise too much. I mean no disrespect or reflection towards the Education Department when I say that they are apt to look at this whole scheme with suspicion and regard as impracticable if not worse. The Simla Conference have undoubtedly cleared the way for its acceptance in educational quarters; still to make the experiment successful those who have faith should be enabled to carry it out and the Government and the Departments should give them all facilities. It is for this reason I suggest that the actual working out of it should be entrusted to a Committee which will fix the syllabus, get textbooks prepared and otherwise do whatever required for its practical working. The Departments may have a general sort of control but should not have any discretion to upset the schemes and calculations of the Committee. You would therefore notice that the first suggestion is for the appointment of the Committee. I hope there will be no difficulty in this. It would relieve the department of the responsibilities of making successful a scheme in which it may have no faith at present and at the same time enable those who have faith in it to work it out unhampered. It is not [an] easy matter to suggest the name of the committee but I may tentatively give you the

names of Babu Badrinath Verma, Principal, Bihar Vidyapeeth; Babu Lakshmi Narayan, Secretary, A.I.S.A., Bihar Branch; Maulvi Nazir Ahmad, B.Sc., B.T., Assistant Headmaster, Visheshwar Seminary, Chapra; and one member of the Education Department who may be considered suitable in view of the consideration mentioned above. The Headmaster of the Training School to be started will be the ex-officio secretary and member of the Committee. I think this will be the first step. The second will be the starting of the Training School which I understand will be done in these next few days.

You may have noticed that the Bombay Government have given recognition to students who passed the examination of the Gujarat Vidyapeeth and the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth. I think the students of the Bihar Vidyapeeth and Kashi Vidyapeeth who passed before 1930 deserve similar recognition. The matter has probably been under your consideration for some time. I do not know if you have arrived at any decision. Since the election to the District Boards will be coming on within the next few months and one of the demands is that students of the Vidyapeeth should be given franchise on the same condition as students of the Government recognised schools and universities. This matter should be settled now so that they may exercise their franchise in the forthcoming election. You will probably have to ask the Local Self-Government Department to give them franchise when you have recognised the examinations of the Vidyapeeth.

I am sorry to inform you that the reply of Prof. K.T. Shah to my letter is disappointing. He does not like to continue as Chairman or even a member of the Committee and has asked me not to press him. You will be in difficulty, I know, but you must find a way out of it now.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

*Enclosure:*

#### THE WARDHA EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME

##### *Its Organization in Bihar—A Seven-Year Programme*

1. The Scheme be introduced in a compact area of the Province, say, a thana or a subdivision with possibility of running 50 schools, more or less. In selecting the area the following considerations may be borne in mind:

(a) If possible the area to be selected should have a historical background of successful working of the constructive programme of the Congress, such as through the All India Spinners' Association, All India Village Industries Association, the Harijan Sangh, etc. The inhabitants of such an area will be expected to have an understanding of the social ideology underlying the scheme and it will be easier for the school to be in contact with the community life in the neighbourhood and to be its centre and source of inspiration.

(b) The inhabitants of the area should be prepared to contribute towards the cost of the introduction of the Scheme such as by an offer of land sufficient to maintain a teacher or building equipments or cash.

(c) The area should either have no high school or its number should be very small.

(d) A statement may be issued by Dr. Rajendra Prasad or the Hon'ble the Education Minister inviting applications from people of different areas preferring their respective claims for the selection of their areas for the experiment.

2. Education in the selected area should be made free and compulsory for seven years for all children of seven plus years.

3. There will be two types of schools in the area: newly started schools on the introduction of free and compulsory basic education in the area, and the schools existing from before converted into the new type of schools. In the former, a class will be added every year and in the latter a class will be converted into a class of the new type every year. In seven years both the kinds of the schools will be full-fledged Wardha type schools and, at the end of the seventh year, the experiment will be completed and it will be possible to decide upon the future line of action with regard to the reorganisation of the educational system of the whole Province on the new lines. *V24/M04* *M4-2*

4. The first essential is the training of teachers for these schools. 350 teachers will be required for the 50 schools in 7 years. It may be necessary to employ more than 7 teachers in some of the schools. If more than one craft is taught in a school, the number may be more than one for each class from the very beginning.

5. Teachers will be trained for this purpose in accordance with the following programme:

- (i) July 1938 to December 1938—60 teachers for 2 years
- (ii) January 1938 to December 1938—60 teachers for 3 years
- (iii) January 1940 to December 1940—120 teachers for 3 years

(In January, 1941, it will be necessary to have a third class in every school and it will also be necessary to send the first teacher for further training.)

- (iv) January 1941 to December 1941—60 teachers for 3 years' work (One refresher course of a year for further qualifying teacher of batch I.)
- (v) January 1942 to December 1942—60 teachers for 3 years' work (One refresher course of a year for batch II.)
- (vi) January 1943 to December 1943—60 fresh teachers for 3 years (One refresher course for batch IV for 1 year.)
- (vii) January 1944 to December 1944—60 fresh teachers for 3 years (Two refresher courses for 6 months each for batches V and VI, and so on.)

N.B.: (a) It is possible that by giving each teacher a chance of a year or two of work in actual schools, it may be possible to reduce the period of 3 years' training proposed in the Scheme for the full course to 2 years' training.

(b) For the first batch matriculates with background of successful teaching experience or craft work may be selected on the higher rates of stipend already decided upon. But for subsequent batches a knowledge of only matriculation standard may be insisted upon and the rate of stipend may be reduced. The award of stipends may also be gradually discontinued.

(c) The pupil-teachers of the old C.T. Training course in the Patna Training School may be distributed among the three other Training Schools in the Province in July 1939 so that [the] Patna Training School may specialise only in Basic Education Training for the time being and it may be possible for it to admit 120 students during its third course of training.

(d) The Practising School attached to the Patna Training School should have education through a basic craft introduced in Classes I and II from July 1938 to serve as Practising School for the new experiment. The other classes will be gradually converted. Tuition in the class in which the basic course is introduced should be free pending the introduction of free and compulsory education in the Patna Municipality. If owing to free tuition more children join, an additional teacher may be given and an additional section should be added to the class for providing facilities for adequate practice to the teachers under training. The neighbouring primary schools should also be converted into Basic Schools for this purpose and their maintenance should be taken over by Government.

(e) Ten bighas of land be taken on lease for seven years for a farm adjacent to the Training School pending the conversion of the Patna Training School as a Basic Training School on a permanent footing. In the latter case the land should be permanently acquired. The cost of bus hire for sending students to the agricultural farm for training in agriculture as a basic craft will thus be eliminated and it will be possible to use the farm by the Practising School students as well without any additional cost and with possibilities of some additional outturn in product.

6. It is essential for the success of the experiment that decision based on expert knowledge and that of persons with faith in the possibility of the Scheme be taken and acted upon quickly. Proposals passing through the ordinary departmental procedure take time to materialise and do not permit of elasticity.

A Board with Dr. Rajendra Prasad as Chairman and with Acharya Badrinath Varma, Babu Lakshmi Narayan, Secretary, A.I.S.A., Bihar Branch, and others as members and as member-secretary be set up to guide and control the experiment. All powers of laying down the syllabus, of deciding upon the procedure and pace of the experiment, of sanctioning modifications in the light of experience in the schemes of the training school and the new type basic schools should be vested in them. The Government should place every year a grant at the disposal of the Board within which expenditure would be sanctioned at the discretion of the Board. The services of the experts of the Education, Agricultural, Industries Departments of the Government particularly and all the development departments generally should be made available to the Board. The Secretary to the Board may be authorised to have direct access to the Head of the

Department, the Secretary to the Government, and to the Hon'ble the Minister. Whenever he addresses Government directly, he will forward a copy of his letter to the Director of Public Instructions.

The following should be the officers specially placed in charge of the experiment:

(a) *The Superintendent.* The Headmaster of the Patna Training School should be called the Superintendent for purposes of the experiment in the Wardha Scheme. He will be in charge of the training of teacher-craftsmen and craftsman-teachers and inspectors for conducting and supervising the experiment and generally superintending their work on the technical side.

(b) *The Organiser.* He should be a wholetime paid officer chosen either from the Department or outside the Department to carry on propaganda in favour of the Scheme, to examine and to arrange for the site, buildings and equipments of the schools and to look after the administrative side of the new type schools generally.

(c) *Two Inspectors* (one a craftsman-teacher and the other a teacher-craftsman) to go round the new schools, spend a few days together in each school and help the craft-work and the teaching centring round it.

The organiser should be appointed at once and in selecting candidates for the training to be started in July, care should be taken to select about four or five such candidates as may, in due course, be appointed as Inspectors and Teachers of the Training Schools.

7. The Superintendent with one or two Training School teachers selected by him and the Organiser should be deputed during the ensuing Puja vacation for a fortnight to study the experiment of a year's training to be conducted by Dr. Zakir Husain Saheb at the Jamia Millia, Delhi, with effect from the month of August 1938.

If two suitable men be available either from successful teachers or craftsmen, they may be deputed for a year's course at the Jamia-Millia.

The Superintendent should have facilities provided him to have in his midst from time to time to cooperate in his first training work the eminent propounders of the scheme such as Dr. Zakir Husain, Kaka Kalelkar, Sjt. Aryyanakam, Sjt. Vinobaji, Smt. Asha Devi.

For these purposes, allotment may be made under the appropriate head to enable him to pay their travelling expenses.

50. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

Purushottam Building  
Opp. Opera House  
Bombay-4  
9th July 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

I got your letter of yesterday. I did not write to you for the same reason as I also thought that we will soon meet at Wardha, but the Working Committee is



postponed at the instance of the President.

I hear from Kishorbhai today that Bapu's health is not well and the pressure is high. You have not written anything about it.

You can give instructions to send about two dozen mango (graft) to Bardoli addressed to the Manager, Swaraj Ashram.

A few days ago I read an article in *The Times of India* under the heading "After C.P. Bihar", giving some quotations from the *Searchlight* severely criticising some of the members of the Congress Assembly Party in Bihar. There is no doubt that ambitions for personal position, scrambling for position of power, have resulted in lowering the standard of our public life after the acceptance of office. Men holding high positions in the Congress in the past have set very bad examples and they have been [encouraged] by the Press. This has been noticed in almost all Provinces. In Madras forces have combined to create deadlocks. In spite of all this, up to now our Ministers have, on the whole, resisted all temptations and attempts to lower the moral standards of the Congress administration except in C.P. I have [heard] nothing from C.P. about the agreement made at Pachmarhi, but I know that it has been put into effect. This is going to be a tough problem.

You must have known that an organised agitation is going on in a section of [the] Press on behalf of [the] President to get the amount of money given by Vithalbhai's will. Certain articles have appeared in the *Mahatma* and they have been circulated to all presses for a reprint. Devidas has sent me a copy. This propaganda is intended to coerce me. I hope you are improving steadily. I am also suffering from 'asthmatic' tendency, but I did not find any remedy for it.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Magan Wadi  
Wardha.

# 51. To Sri Krishna Sinha

Wardha  
July 13, 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

I have received a letter from Dr. Sinha informing me that the Ministry is going to create a separate portfolio for dealing with the questions of aborigines and depressed classes. I am very glad to hear this. I understand it is also under contemplation to have an additional Parliamentary Secretary—Mr. D. Samanta. I have no objection to Mr. Samanta personally being appointed. But

there are two considerations which you will have to weigh. In the first place, is it desirable to add to the number [of] Parliamentary Secretaries? In the second place, Mr. Samanta has just joined the Congress Party. Will not his appointment so soon after his joining the Congress Party be considered as an unfair exercise of patronage by the Ministry? If you could appoint him without creating an additional post by inducing one of the Parliamentary Secretaries to resign it would be very good. I am mentioning these points for your consideration. You are in a better position to judge the situation there as it is at present. If you do not apprehend any serious opposition in the Party or outside you should certainly have him. As I am out of touch I cannot give any definite opinion and hence have to content myself with suggesting points for your consideration. I have written to similar effect in reply to Mr. Sinha's letter.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

P.S. I have received a letter from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad suggesting that I should issue a statement regarding the recent understanding with the landlords which he has brought about. As I am not in possession of the points of difference and the terms of settlement I am not in a position to do so. You will recollect that more than a fortnight ago I requested you to send me the report of the Select Committee and other documents which could make the position clear to me. But I have not heard anything as yet in reply. The newspaper reports with so many statements and counter-statements are confusing. I shall be obliged for a note making the position clear. I see that Babu Jamuna Prasad Singh objects to something said by Chandreswar Babu and not knowing the original terms of the Bill and the settlement I am unable to understand it.

52. *From Dr. Syed Mahmud, Minister of Education, Bihar*

Patna  
13th July 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I got your letters. Many thanks. In Simla the Education Committee's work went on unexpectedly peacefully. Lady Grigg, Mr. Parkinson, Educational Commissioner, Dr. Ziauddin and Dr. F.M. Khan were vehement in opposing the Wardha Scheme in the beginning, but Dr. Zakir Husain explained what is not in Wardha Scheme. After his explanation they were taken aback and at once changed the front. But of course took the line that Dr. Zakir Husain himself had changed and Wardha Scheme was modified to a very great extent owing to the public criticism. Dr. Zakir Husain in explaining what is not Wardha Scheme said that handicraft was admitted to be essential. The boys must produce

something from hand and when it is done the work of the Wardha Committee as a body of educationists was over. They had nothing to do whether those articles were sold or thrown in the river. It is the business of the State or of the particular committee or committees in charge of the work. Once the Chairman said that on such and such point Abbot Report agrees with Wardha Committee's Report. A certain European member objected to this that owing to Wardha Committee accepts Abbot Report on that point because the latter came out first (sic). However, all is well that ends well. If they wanted to interpret Wardha Scheme in their own way let them do so; it is not our concern. The Chairman, Mr. Kher, did very well and his tact was very helpful. Dr. Zakir Husain's presence was of course helpful to the committee a great deal in arriving at the conclusion they did. I shall send you [a] full report of the committee when it comes to me a fortnight later. I have no report with me at present.

If Prof. Shah insists on going out from the Education Reorganisation Committee what we should do? Shall I request Mr. Sinha to preside? Please let me have your view at once.

Your second letter reached me with the scheme you have sent. We have already got up a scheme about the training of the teachers on the Wardha lines. But we will have to modify our scheme in the light of your proposals. But there are some difficulties in your proposals which I will point out to you for your further consideration. For instance the question of land. Each school must have at least 10 bighas of land for agricultural purposes. If the schools are concentrated in one thana it would be difficult to get so many persons to gift so much land. There are some other difficulties in concentrating the schools in one locality. I agree with you that a committee should be in charge of this training. I hope the training work will be started early in August.

As to giving recognition to students who passed the examination of Bihar Vidyaapeeth, I started the file in August last. I have repeatedly asked Badri Babu to formulate his proposals about it. He has not done so as yet. I am writing to him to remind [him] to do so at once.

You have not written anything about your own health. I hope you are much better now. With kind regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Syed Mahmud

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Wardha.

### 53. From Vallabhbhai Patel

Poona

15th July 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I came here today in connection [with] some important legislations that are expected to come before the August session.

So you have got a long holiday of 6 months. Jawahar has gone abroad for at least 4 months. You go out for 6 months, and we have to deal with a President who does not know his own job.

You must have seen his recent performance.

I am going to Ahmedabad on 19th and will come there on 23rd. I am glad you will have long rest.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

54. *To Anugrah Narayan Sinha*

Wardha  
July 17, 1938

My dear Anugrah Babu,

Ever since I tendered my resignation from the Labour Committee I have been worried about the substitute. I had written to Shankerlal Banker asking him either to take my place or to suggest the substitute. He is here. I have had a long discussion with him. He says that the best person from all points of view would be Mr. Manu Subedar. He is a well-known and brilliant economist. He was a Minto-Professor of Economics of the Calcutta University. He has acted as Mahatma Gandhi's substitute in labour dispute at Ahmedabad. He is regarded as a thoroughly fair person. Labour should have full confidence in him because in the Ahmedabad dispute he gave them the fairest deal possible and the objection was not on the side of labour at all but on the side of millowners. He has had some hand in placing the arbitration machinery in Ahmedabad on its sound scientific basis. Capital also should have no objection as he is not directly associated with any Labour Union. He has been acting as an Economic Adviser generally and knows the position of the industries and actual working of many industries thoroughly well so that he can be depended upon to give [a] thoroughly good report to the Government which will be fair and practical. If you agree to appoint him in my place I might ask Shankerlalji to sound him and when he agrees, the announcement will be made. I would suggest that you will consult not only your other colleagues in the Cabinet but also Abdul Bari and such members of the Labour Committee as may be there; I mean particularly Jagat Babu and Rajendra Kishore. My experience of Cawnpore tells me that it is easier and on the whole more helpful to labour to proceed in such a way as not to lose the confidence of either party. The Cawnpore Committee could not do this and the result has been that the labourers have got after two months' strike only just what the Bombay labourers got without any trouble as a result of report of the Bombay Committee. I am, therefore, anxious that your Committee should produce a report which would be acceptable and so given effect to immediately it

is made. The problem is complicated as many industries are involved. I do not apprehend that any Committee can give a report which will be against labour, therefore there should be no apprehension that labour will not get justice. The name suggested by me will at once command confidence of intellectuals and labour has no reason to be disappointed nor capitalists have any ostensible reason to distrust him. He is a Congress M.L.A. in the Central Assembly.

2. There is another matter on which I desire to address you. Our Province is principally an [agricultural] Province. The prices of agricultural produce have been very low for a number of years. Efficiency[in] agriculture is also not high so that our people cannot produce as much as people, say, in the Punjab, not to speak of other countries. Tenancy reform and reduction of rent are good in a way but they touch only the fringe of the question. Our average rent in the Province as a whole will not be more than Rs.4 per bigha. Even if it is reduced to half, the income of zamindars may be reduced from 10 crores to 5 crores. But the income of our people will be raised only by 5 crores, that is, Rs.1/8 per head per year or ans. /2/- per month which, after all, is a very inconsiderable amount. The prices of foodgrains which are its principal produce have gone down near about 40 per cent and the income of agriculturists has, therefore, been reduced nearly to half. We have to think out some measures for raising the prices and for increasing the yield per bigha. I, therefore, attached very great value to the legislation fixing the price of sugarcane last year. We have to think out similar measures with regard to other crops, if possible. We have also to press Government of India to help us in this matter. If they cannot find out any way of doing it they must change the exchange ratio. Similarly we have to think out other ways of adding to the income of the people. After all Congress Ministry can justify itself only if it succeeds in these matters. I have thrown out this suggestion for your consideration and for the consideration of the Ministry. I have nothing definite just at present to suggest but I wish you would give your earnest attention to this matter.

I am enclosing a statement showing the fall in prices of grains in the Madras Presidency. You may get similar figures for the principal agricultural products of our Province.

3. Two things have been done by the Orissa Ministry which might very well be done by our Ministry also. They have given Rs.25,000 as capital to the A.I.S.A. of Orissa Branch, for developing khadi work. This has enabled them to push in the work vigorously. Our work is increasing very rapidly and we must see that the fullest advantage is taken by the situation and that the work is not allowed to suffer for lack of capital. After all this is the one thing which puts money directly into the pockets of the poor and Babu is very keen on it. A.I.S.A. has already put in all the money it has got and the Government must see to it that any further capital that may be required is forthcoming.

In the second place the Orissa Government has ordered that all yarn required and used by Government should be charkha yarn. Yarn is used in jails, weaving institutes, etc. Could we not do the same? I am sending an extract from a letter of

the Secretary, A.I.S.A., Orissa Branch, on this point which will explain what has been done there.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Enclosures not included.

55. *From Dr. Syed Mahmud, Minister of Education, Bihar*

Patna  
18th July 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I got your letter of the 14th instant. Many thanks. I have a great respect and high regard for Maulana Abdul Wahab, as you know. I will do anything for him. His son Maulavi Abdur Rahman seems to me to be an eccentric fellow. He came to me several times; I met him once or twice and told him that I would try to do something for him. He is only fit for rural development work. The scheme has not yet been started and I told him to wait till then. But he, and many others like him, want me to provide money and post for them, whether it is possible for me or not. They seem to think that I have power to give them even Government money. Maulavi Abdur Rahman may have come and waited for four hours, I do not know. I keep so busy that it is not possible for me to meet and talk to each and every individual. My whole time will be taken up, and a good portion of it even now is taken up, if I meet and talk to all those who come to me. Those friends who call themselves Congressmen bother me more than others and bring all sorts of impossible requests. The Mussalmans think that their claims are overlooked and they must be provided for. But on the other hand, in Congress circle, so I am told, it is thought that I am giving posts only to Mussalmans. The other day I explained the whole thing before the Provincial Working Committee and gave a list of all the Mussalmans I have appointed from beginning to end. In fact I have appointed none. They have been appointed in due course by the department concerned. Soon after the first appointment when I heard that such thing is being talked in Congress circle I introduced competitive examination and since then people are appointed on that basis. Communal quota is of course fixed. The whole [of] this is so painful that it is only strong sense of my loyalty to the Congress that I do not burst up. I will send you the list later on and I intend to give it to the Press and to the public. But I have not done it up till now because it will bring discredit to our organisation.

I shall write to you my suggestions regarding the Wardha educational scheme which you have sent.

As to your other letter about certified khadi, I did not know anything about it.

Recently my sons have purchased quite good stock of khadi and it may be that they have not purchased it from certified shops. I shall look into it in future.

Hoping you are well. With kind regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Syed Mahmud

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
C/o Seth Jamnalal Bajaj  
Wardha.

56. *From Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar*

Patna  
19th July 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Yesterday I have sent through post the reports of the Select Committee appointed to consider the Bakhost Bill and the Bihar Tenancy Bill. I hope you are in receipt of them. Today I am sending you a note as wanted by you. The Assembly meets on the 25th. Our idea is to recommit the Tenancy Bill to the Select Committee for a day or two, so that the necessary changes may be made in the Bill and unnecessary discussion in the Assembly may be avoided. In the meantime we shall discuss and pass the Bakhost Bill.

A meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee is going to be held on the 31st. The Congress-Zamindar agreement is one of the items in the agenda. Let us see how members receive it. Of late, there has been a good deal of extremely adverse criticism of it in the meeting addressed by Swami Sahajanand and his group.

The Bengali question is also assuming a serious proportion. Not a day passes when we are not abused publicly in the Press. The criticisms are crossing all bounds of decency. It was time that our policy in this direction was settled once for all. We can't allow ourselves to be browbeaten but we must be prepared to look into the whole question dispassionately and arrive at a just conclusion. But nothing in this connection can be done without you. I myself did not want to disturb you and risk your health. So we have to put up with all this for some time.

We intend to bring in the winter session of the Assembly a Bill to amend the L.S.G. Act. By one of the provisions of the Bill seats will be reserved for Musalmans in the Local Bodies, but the election will be joint. This appeared in the Press and Maulana Azad on seeing it wrote to me that before such Bill was actually brought, it would be better that an attempt [was] made to talk with the Musalmans and tell them that Government would be prepared to concede to reservation of seats through joint electorate if they agreed to it. He thinks that if such a course was adopted the Musalmans of Bihar would be agreeable to it. He

further thinks that if an attempt [was] made to make the Musalmans agree to it after the Bill had actually been brought, then we would fail to make them agree to it. The Musalmans in that case would feel that Government stood committed to that extent and they would fight for separate electorate. He has offered to come to Patna and negotiate with the Musalmans, but before he does so he wants to know your opinion. I hope Maulana Sahib will be going to attend the meeting of the Working Committee. You will kindly talk with him and let me know accordingly.

I have thought over the matter about which Tandonji spoke to you. I think it will be a rather difficult matter. However the Chief Secretary has gone to Ranchi. He will be coming in a day or two. I will then look into the matter and see what can be done.

I hope you must have read in the papers that we are going to appoint a Conciliation Board to settle the labour disputes at Jamshedpur. We want to appoint Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram the sole member of it. I think he will be the best man for it. I request you kindly to persuade him to accept it. On hearing from you I will announce his name. In the interest of peace at Jamshedpur it is necessary that he should accept it. This must be done soon as any delay will make labourers suspicious and restive. I may be informed of it by wire.

It is a fact that Shiva Shanker purchased some cloth from one unauthorised khadi shop some time back. I absolutely don't do anything regarding my domestic affairs. But when somehow it came to my notice I at once asked him not to do so, and he stopped doing it. I don't know why some friends of mine should have thought it proper to bring it to the notice of Mahatmaji when a word to me would have been sufficient. However, in the present state of the politics of my Province I am not surprised if some friend of mine could not satisfy his zeal for khadi without bringing such a thing to the notice of Mahatmaji himself. However, I am genuinely sorry for what happened.

I hope you are regaining your health.

Yours sincerely,  
S.K. Sinha

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Camp: Wardha.

Enclosure not included.

57. *From Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar*

Patna  
20th July 1938

Dear Rajendra Babu,

I hope you are in receipt of my letter and the other papers sent by me. In my letter of yesterday I forgot to write to you about one thing. The other day you



handed over to me a paper which contained as to what should be done about the aborigines of Chhotanagpur. I put up that in a meeting of ours and a committee was formed to frame a programme for the uplift of the aborigines. I also wrote to all the members of the Chhotanagpur requesting them to let me know what they would like Government to do for Chhotanagpur. Now Mr. Devendra Nath Samanta too has joined our party. He, Krishna Ballabh Babu and others are preparing a scheme and they have promised to give me one. In the meantime, we are making a scheme ready to impart primary education to the aborigines and in the supplementary demand which is coming up before the Assembly in the middle of August we are going to include a demand for this too. I had been to Daltonganj the other day. Anugrah Babu has gone to Chaibasa, Ranchi and other places. In the third week of August we hope to move to Ranchi and then we shall try to come in greater touch with the people of that area.

2. The other day Sinha Sahib called us together and told [us] that he would organise a function to celebrate the termination of the first year of our Government on which occasion we can make a survey of what has been done in the past and what is intended to be done in the future. I, at first, hesitated as we shall have to give our considered opinion on many topics, but he was very insistent and so we had to yield. I am getting a speech ready and I hope to send it on to you so that you may see it before it is actually delivered.

I hope you are doing well.

Yours sincerely,  
S.K. Sinha

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
Wardha, C.P.

58. *From Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Minister of Finance, Bihar*

Patna  
25th July 1938

My dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of 17th July on my return from Jamshedpur yesterday. Immediately I consulted my colleagues, Professor Bari and Jagat Babu and they all agreed that Mr. Manu Subedar may be appointed Chairman of the Labour Committee. I have just sent a telegram to you. I shall consult Professor Saran also. I think he will have no objection in the matter. In the circumstances, it is desirable that Mr. Manu Subedar may be sounded and his consent obtained. As soon as I am informed about his consent I shall take necessary steps to formally request him in this connection and announce his name.

Ever since I have assumed office I have felt that agitation for reduction of rent,

however catching it may be, is not likely to solve the real problem. My own view has always been that unless we increase the productive power of the soil and thereby add to the national wealth, we are not likely to add to the prosperity of the Province. I have, therefore, impressed upon the people the absolute necessity of taking steps that may lead to increased production. The Electric Grid system, which is intended to provide for means of irrigation in areas where it is difficult to get water otherwise, has been undertaken with that point of view. I have also held a conference of District Officers and impressed upon them the desirability of tackling irrigation problems of South Bihar and Chhotanagpur districts. I am sorry to say that they are not fully cooperating with me. Some District Officers have, of course, taken up the work in right earnest, but others have not; my illness has also been responsible for considerable delay in this direction. I shall tell my viewpoint to those who are interested in the matter.

As for the third point relating to what has been done by the Orissa Ministry, I shall speak to Doctor Sahib about the matter. Primarily, it is his Department that takes the first step. I remember, some money has been allotted to the All India Spinners' Association, but I am not in possession of details. I shall, however, request Doctor Sahib to examine the matter more carefully in the light of your suggestion when I shall be handing over your letter to him for further action.

I am now much better and have been able to perform the journey to Jamshedpur by car. I have been able to stand the strain but I am still limping and I am not able to use my left leg properly.

Trusting this finds you in good health,

I remain,  
Yours affectionately,  
A.N. Sinha

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
P.O. Wardhaganj, C.P.

59. *To Sri Krishna Sinha*

July 28, 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

Sjt. Batukeshwar Dutta who is a Government of India prisoner is at present in Patna Jail. I understand that he has been keeping bad health for a pretty long time and is getting worse and worse. Could you not, after ascertaining facts about his health, move the Government of India for his release? He has already spent about 9 years or more in jail. You were able to save Sjt. Kamalnath Tewary by your intervention. Although he is suffering from T.B. it is hoped he may recover. Similarly if Sjt. Batukeshwar Dutta could also be saved it would [be]

worth [trying]. Mahatmaji might also move the Government of India if he could get reliable information about his health. I shall be obliged if you let me have such information as you can give for being used by him. If there be any difficulty in this then the report you will send will also been keeping by him with the Government of India but for his own satisfaction [sic].

I wrote to you a letter about the Bengali-Bihari question enclosing a copy of the Working Committee resolution. You must have received it and I am expecting the reply tomorrow or a day after. Please wire me so that I may frame my own programme.

This morning I have received a telephone message from Mathura Babu asking me [to] request Maulana to attend the Provincial Congress Committee meeting which is going to be held on the 31st. Maulana has kindly agreed to be at Patna on the 31st. He is going to Calcutta from here tomorrow. He will reach there in the morning of the 30th and after doing some urgent work he will leave by some evening train reaching Patna in the morning of the 31st.

I got your letter asking me to induce Sjt. Jairamdas Doulatram to act as a member of the Conciliation Board of Jamshedpur. I was expecting him for the meeting of the Working Committee but unfortunately on account of his ill-health he could not come. I am afraid it will not be possible for him to accept this engagement. On account of his ill-health he has resigned his chairmanship of the Bombay Labour Committee. So you will have to take somebody else.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

60. *From Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar*

Patna  
31st July 1938

Dear Rajendra Babu,

I am in receipt of your letter dated the 28th July. I have decided to write to the Government of India about Batukeshwar Dutta. The file has gone to Ranchi in connection with another matter. I will write to the Government of India as soon as I get back the file. I may inform you, by the way, that I have allowed him electric fan and the use of musical instruments—the two things for which he sent a petition from jail. I will send you a copy of the report of the medical examination after I get it from the Inspector-General.

2. I have already written to you in reply to your letter, about the Bihari-Bengali question. I hope you are in receipt of it.

3. Today we had a meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee attended by about 200 members. I am glad to inform you that the agreement has been ratified

by an overwhelming majority. Swamiji's speech in opposition to the agreement was of the usual type.

4. I am sorry to hear that we cannot get Sjt. Jairam[das] Doulatram to serve on the Conciliation Board. I see I will have to try for some other gentleman.

Yours sincerely,  
S.K. Sinha

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
C/o Seth Jamnalal Bajaj  
Wardha (C.P.).

61. *To Vallabhbhai Patel*

Wardha  
August 3, 1938

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I have received your letter yesterday. I have wired to Sjt. Biswanath Das to send me copy of the Bill and other papers and also inquired of him if he can come here for discussion. I learn from Mahadevbhai that you have already written to him to come here, so I am waiting for him. When he comes I will discuss with him. I hope you will also be coming.

Two or three days ago Kaka Saheb and Nana Athvale who is in charge of the Mahila Ashram here and four of the boys who have [been] living with Kaka Saheb got cholera. Two of the boys have already passed away. The condition of the others is said to be better. They are having the best possible treatment available. Kaka Saheb himself has from the very beginning been less severely hit than the others. Still they all need careful treatment which they are having.

Jamnalalji will probably be leaving for Calcutta tomorrow morning. He and I are thinking of going to Tiruvannamalai to meet Raman Maharshi as soon as he is free from Calcutta engagement.

I hope you are well.

Rajendra Prasad

62. *To Anugrah Narayan Sinha*

August 3, 1938

My dear Anugrah Babu,

You know Syt. Rahul Sankrityayan who has done so much good work in recovering manuscripts of great value from Tibetan monasteries bringing to light

many works of philosophy which have become extinct in India and also throwing much light on that period of the Hindu History which is enveloped in darkness. He has gone on his fourth trip to Tibet. I have received a letter from him from Tibet this morning. I am enclosing a copy for your perusal. It was through the instrumentality of you all that a grant of Rs.6,000 was made to the Research Society for meeting the expenses of a party which was to go to Tibet for securing manuscripts or copies of manuscripts. Rahulji says that owing to famine conditions prevailing there expenses have gone up considerably and he will not be able to complete the work without an additional expense of Rs.4,000 more. He has been fortunate this time in securing the help of the Tibetan Government who have ordered even manuscripts which are kept under lock and seal to be shown to him and to be photographed by him. His party consists of a photographer, an assistant photographer, a Tibetan Pandit and a Sanskrit Pandit besides himself. The Tibetan Government has placed at his disposal ponies and servants and he has been going round from library to library in search of unknown manuscripts and works. From the experience we have of his past achievements I have no doubt that this time also he will be able to bring with himself many valuable manuscripts or their copies and photographs. Thus the work that he has been doing is of the highest cultural value and I have no hesitation in recommending that a further amount of Rs.4,000 needed by him may be granted to the Bihar and Orissa Research Society earmarked for this particular purpose. There is hardly any time; this should be done soon. I do not know if a formal application has to be made, but I trust it will not be necessary to insist upon that formality. Rahulji would have gladly returned after doing what was possible within the amount originally granted, but the fear is that the concession and opportunity allowed by the Tibetan Government during this visit of his may not be available later and thus much that may be recoverable may be lost for good. I am, therefore, anxious that this should be done without delay. He will have to return in September. There is hardly any time. I am writing to Dr. Mahmud also as the matter will have to go to his Department.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Enclosure not included.

63. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

August 4, 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

I have received your letter of the 3rd August. Yesterday I have posted to you the papers and the Bill regarding the Orissa case. I have also telephoned to Mr.

Kanungo to send one of the Ministers to Wardha in case of Mr. Biswanath's inability to proceed to Wardha owing to illness.

I have issued our statement with [a] few corrections and alterations to the Press and it has appeared here this morning. So I believe we are already too late in the field. There is a chorus of condemnation of our resolution because of our timid attitude which is one of willingness to move but unwillingness to [hurt.] Dr. Khare has taken full advantage of our weakness. He has been misrepresenting us by bold lies and suppression of truth for the last 3-4 days in his speeches and private conversations in Poona and Bombay. Our sense of over-fairness is misrepresented as the weakness of our case. However, it is too late to mend. Bapu's article will appear now when the public mind is so thoroughly prepared against its reception at its proper value.

I was grieved to hear that Kaka Saheb and Nana Athvale have been attacked with cholera and also the four brothers who were living with Kaka and two of the boys have passed away. I hope Kaka Saheb and the rest are now out of danger.

I do not understand why you want to go to Tirruvannamalai. Surely you are not in search of a greater Mahatma than you have got near you?

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Wardha.

64. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

August 6, 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

I have received your letter of the 4th and the postcard of the 5th August. Mr. Biswanath Das has wired to me yesterday that he was coming to Wardha on Sunday. I am still busy with the Bombay Assembly problems as their session is to be held on the 17th. There are some other problems to be disposed of and I am not sure that I will be able to come to Wardha on Monday, but if I can finish them tomorrow, I may turn up on Monday morning.

There is trouble in Sind and they want me to go to Karachi. They have also written to Maulana Saheb to come there.

I have received a letter from Dr. Satyapal of which yours is probably a copy. I have written to him that I have got no funds to help him in such matters and about the exemption which he wants, I have referred him to Maulana Saheb, because you know he is very touchy about any matter concerning the Province entrusted to him being handled by anybody else.

Dr. Khare is still behaving like a mad man. He made numerous false and

reckless charges against the Parliamentary Sub-Committee; some of them have not been reported in the English Press. In private meetings also he goes off limits of decency. He has started personal attacks particularly against me. Yesterday he had a reception from Ambedkar's volunteer corps. There he made a bad speech and also mischievously insinuated that Gandhiji took him to task for taking a Harijan in his Cabinet. He wanted to suggest that while he was doing so much for the Harijans, Gandhiji came in his way. It is interesting to note that he wrote to [me] twice for taking disciplinary action against Agnibhoj for his misbehaviour.

I don't like your going to the South for a few days. If you wish to go you should only go for some days' rest.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Wardha.

65. *From Dr. Syed Mahmud, Minister of Education, Bihar*

Patna  
15 August 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I got your kind letter today. I had received a letter from Mr. Rahul on which I had already taken action and very strongly recommended for a further grant of Rs.4,000. On receipt of your letter today I spoke to Anugrah Babu and he informed me that money had been sanctioned already on my recommendation.

The Wardha scheme training will begin from the 1st of September. By concentrating schools we shall find difficulties in getting land. I shall include the names you have suggested in the Committee.

More in my next.

With kind regards,

Yours ever,  
Syed Mahmud

66. *From M. Asaf Ali*

CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY CONGRESS PARTY

Council House  
Simla  
19th August 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Many thanks for your letter of 29th July from Wardha. I trust you are fully restored to health now. Your ill health has been such a source of anxiety to your

friends, and as a distant but sincere one, although I have not written to you, I have shared this anxiety all along.

I am fully aware of poor B.K. Dutta's case. He was convicted along with Bhagat Singh in the Assembly Bomb Case. As their defence counsel, I knew the truth from these boys, and I regretted B.K. Dutta's obstinacy in "confessing" that he too had thrown a bomb into the Assembly while actually he had not done so! He stood by Bhagat Singh while the latter threw the two bombs, and fired one or two shots. B.K. Dutta was certainly in the know of Bhagat Singh's design. I considered it my duty to advise him not to distort this fact in his confession and quite unnecessarily and wrongly confess to having thrown one of the two bombs. But his reply was curiously obstinate and I remember it to this day. He said "I have lived with Bhagat Singh since I was 14, and I have shared his fate all along. It would be disloyal of me to let him bear the whole burden now." Even Bhagat Singh pleaded with him to stick to the actual truth: but his deep-seated sentiment would not permit him to dissociate himself from an act of which he was not guilty. This is the plain and absolute truth. My own impression was that B.K. Dutta was just drawn into the circle of Bhagat Singh and his associates at an impressionable age, and even at the time of the commission of the offence he was more of a sentimental companion than anything else. I made this point in my argument[s] both before the Sessions and the High Court—but B.K. Dutta's false confession stood in my way. In fact I mentioned this to Mr. Jeffreys, a Superintendent of Police, whom I knew personally, who happened to be in the High Court in connection with police arrangements.

Further, I was also told by B.K. Dutta at the time that he had run away from his people at the age of 14, and the privations he had suffered during the 5 or 6 years that he was in Bhagat Singh's circle had resulted in chronic dysentery and other kindred ailments. I was very sorry for this poor boy; for apparently it was a case of having been "caught young" when mentally he was not even a fledgling. I should not be surprised in the least if maturer consideration has completely changed his outlook. Somebody, a relation of his I think, saw me in Delhi about him, and I told him to petition the Government for the remission of his remaining sentence. I believe he has served the major portion of his sentence. All I can do is to tell the Honourable the Home Member what I have told you, and request him to consider his case for remission of sentence.

I would leave the cases of Lahore Conspiracy Case prisoners now in U.P. to Mr. Mohan Lal Saxena, for I know nothing about them. I can ask the Home Member to be good enough to examine their cases: but I suppose Mr. Saxena has already moved in the matter, and probably he has himself examined their cases. In any case, if I can be of any assistance to Mr. Saxena, I shall gladly offer him my cooperation.

I trust this will find you in the best of health.

Yours sincerely,  
M. Asaf Ali

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Patna.



## 67. From Vallabhbhai Patel

21st August 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

You must have returned to Wardha by this time. I am enclosing herewith a copy of a complaint received from the editor, *Lokamata*, against the Premier of Orissa and his administration. About the Madras Estate Land Act, I have sent him a letter of advice of which I enclose a copy for your information. You must have met Rajaji in Madras. I should like you to let me know your opinion about the use of [the] Criminal Law Amendment Act, about which we have been criticised by some of our own people. Rajaji has publicly defended it by getting his action approved in the Madras Assembly. The Kerala Provincial Congress Committee has been carrying on with the agitation against the use of these powers. I understand our President is going to tour South India shortly. He may be asked by our opponents to answer publicly questions in this behalf.

Today a crowd of students are expected to visit Segaoon, marching along the way from Nagpur. I do not know what is the object except to make noise. I hope you will be present at that time to witness the occurrence if not for anything else.

I should like to know what you did in Madras and whether your health has been affected by this tour.

I am going to Karachi today.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Wardha.

Enclosure 1:

(Copy of letter from Chintamani Misra, Editor, *Lokamata*)

Cuttack  
11 August 1938

Dear Sir,

It is under a sense of public duty that I venture to bring to your notice a few of the several incidents that are happening in this Province of Orissa under a Congress Ministry and hope that this letter will at least serve the purpose of inviting your attention to that which have assumed the proportions of a public scandal. Though written by me in my individual capacity I may assure you that there is a large number of Congressmen including members of the Orissa Assembly who share my views and will come forward to substantiate the charges before any impartial enquiry.

We as Congressmen are bound to obey and faithfully carry out the mandates

of the High Command, because we realise that in upholding the prestige of the Working Committee we are upholding the prestige of the Congress as an institution. We have therefore accepted the present Ministry as the leaders of the Party, although we do not agree that they are the fittest. We have bowed to the disciplinary rule of the Assembly Party that no member of the Party can dare interpellate the Government on a public wrong, however grievous, however serious, can move a motion of adjournment, can speak on any Government Bill except to support it or in other manner exercise his rights or discharge his duties as a parliamentarian. The enforcement of this rule has resulted in reducing the majority party to a number of 'yes-men', whose one and only function is to be present in the Assembly when the bell rings. This has stifled public life, led to grave errors of judgment on the part of the Government, and made the Chief Minister a law unto himself.

The members are constantly under the fear of disciplinary action taken against them for any the least violation of these conventions. The Party as such is therefore demoralised, and the opposition consisting as it does of a minority of heterogeneous elements is more demoralised. The very strength of our Party unity has proved our greatest weakness and Congress administration, particularly in this Province, is becoming day after day the object of ridicule and sometimes of censure.

Before drawing your attention to specific instances we would venture to refer to another handicap that Orissa is beset with. It has no English daily of such prominence as to attract your attention. The only English nationalist daily that has some circulation in Orissa is the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* which, however, is the favoured child of the Ministry. We therefore, do not get our views published through this medium. The vernacular journals that are being published in the Province have latterly become, with the exception of the *Samaj* reduced now to a Ministerial organ and receiving Government patronage in the shape of Government advertisements and court notices, have all turned, in spite of their best efforts to the contrary, open and consistent critics of the Congress Ministry. The reason, it will be obvious to you, is that there is a limit even to journalistic forbearance and that limit has been exceeded. The C.P. situation was in the front page of almost every newspaper because of the English journals that are published at Nagpur. But far more serious and worse things have occurred in Orissa which have not reached you as yet. We now proceed to mention a few of the several instances of abuse of power, nepotism and, if we may say so, a shameless betrayal of Congress name.

(1) The Chief Minister introduced a Bill known as [the] Madras Estate Land (Orissa Amendment) Bill and rushed it through the Orissa Assembly in spite of criticism in the Press and outside. The Congress members of the Assembly, as loyal supporters of the Government, voted according to command although some of them were convinced and made no secret of their convictions that the Bill was far too drastic and attracted the mischief contemplated in Section 299 of the Government of India Act. It was also apprehended that the Bill would alter the

character of the permanent settlement and would therefore not receive the assent of the Governor or the Governor-General. But the Chief Minister turned a blind eye to these obvious infirmities and carried the Bill through with the majority of numbers. The Bill, as you may have been aware, was reserved by the Governor, who, we reliably understand, worked out the loss of income that would result to the Zamindars if the Bill became law and came to the conclusion that it was expropriatory. The Bill is now pending before the Governor-General and the Governor, obviously under instruction from above, has called for a Round Table Conference of the Ministers and the Zamindars to bring about a compromise. When the Bill was before the House there were several overtures made by the landholders for a compromise, but the Chief Minister would not avail them. The situation at present is that unless a compromise is arrived at the Bill is destined to be knocked on the head. The legal conclusion of this would be either to bring about a crisis by tendering resignation with the inevitable consequence of a re-election, or, what is next best, to accept the recommendation of the Governor-General and modify the Bill according to his direction. The former course, we believe, will not be lightly resorted to. If the latter contingency happens we would be standing self-condemned before the country as we have not been able to carry out the high promises we have held out to the people.

This situation could very well have been avoided if the Chief Minister was more tactful or less despotic. We have been too much worshipping the Party machine which squeezes every member flat and makes the Leader of the Party more divine than human.

(2) We now proceed to give a more recent instance of this abuse of power and trust on the part of the Chief Minister. The *maths* and temples and other religious institutions have remained too long neglected and the need for legislation was felt about a decade ago when Pt. Godavarish Mishra introduced a Bill in the Bihar and Orissa Council. In passing we may point out that this Bill was the handiwork of the present Chief Minister who was then outside Orissa. A Bill was introduced in the Orissa Legislative Assembly by Pandit Godavarish Mishra which substantially is a reproduction of the old Bill. The Chief Minister secretly carried on negotiations with the Mahants and went to the length of asking them for the draft of a Bill that would meet their wishes. He even went to the Emàr Muth and was [closeted] with the Mahant for about two hours. We do not know what occurred there, but the scandal is being talked about from one end of the Province to the other that there have been corrupt promises from both parties. Whatever that may be, the Chief Minister has announced that he would introduce another Bill on behalf of the Government which will have the effect of throttling the non-official Bill of Pt. Mishra already introduced and go a great way to bring about the very same thing that the Mahants themselves want for their own interests. Do you think that in the name of Party discipline the members should close their eyes to all these happenings and record their silent vote although their conscience rebels all the time against what they are forced to do? The Congress thus degenerates itself into an esoteric society with superstitious

faith in and forced obedience to one man's passing whims.

(a) The appointment of the Public Prosecutor of Ganjam was made in the teeth of opposition of a number of party members. The Chief Minister appointed a supporter of his, against the recommendations of the District Judge and the District Magistrate. The District Judge, among other things, wrote of the nominee of the Chief Minister as follows:

His practice in my court is of a very elementary character and I have never heard him in a case of any real importance. I regard him as quite unfitted professionally to conduct sessions cases on behalf of the Crown and in other respects his reputation renders him undesirable as a Public Prosecutor.

The Chief Minister, in disregard of these remarks, appointed this man, one Mr. U.C. Patnaik, for ulterior purposes and justified it on the ground that the candidate was a Congress member. There were interpellations both by Congressmen and members of the opposition in the Assembly but none of them was answered. An adjournment motion was also tabled to protest against the appointment, but Party discipline intervened and it had to be withdrawn. All this happened in February last. Now comes the news that the Congress Public Prosecutor has been found guilty of misappropriation of a client's money and of professional misconduct, and his conduct has been reported to the High Court for disciplinary action. The offence is so serious that he stands the chance of being removed from the rolls for ever. We have to bow down our heads in shame while well-meaning friends point to this as an instance of the efficiency of Congress administration.

(b) The Chief Minister appointed a Deputy Magistrate as District Magistrate of Ganjam, beyond the period of his superannuation. The officiating District Magistrate in his turn during the short period of his Magistracy appointed a number of his relatives and the Chief Minister's relatives in the Revenue Department and obliged himself as well as the Chief Minister. This is not a vague generalisation, but chapter and verse can be quoted if necessary.

(c) This very Magistrate sanctioned a loan of Rs.35,000 to the Zamindar of Sankhemidi which sum ultimately went to the pockets of the Chief Minister in discharge of an unconscionable bargain. This is proveable to demonstration by reference to registered and unregistered documents which I have in my possession.

(d) The object of having a Public Service Commission for each Province has successfully been frustrated by the Congress Ministry in this Province. The recommendations are so manoeuvred that the relatives and favourites of the Ministers get the appointments and merit has no chance of getting recognised. Scores of instances of this can be given.

(e) Even the starvation of the peasants of the Puri district has been exploited by our resourceful Chief Minister. The District Magistrate of Ganjam, to whom reference has been made in sub-clauses (b) and (c), was entrusted with a sum of

Rs.30,000 for the purchase of seeds for being distributed among the famine-afflicted people of Puri district. The District Magistrate in his turn entrusted the purchase to the Chief Minister's brother and nephew. No wonder, therefore, that seeds never sprouted and there was deputation of the Baliana Ryots to the Chief Minister complaining of the waste of public money.

(f) The appointment of members of Governing Bodies and quasi-official committees is being made almost with a shameless defiance of public opinion. The relatives and friends of the Chief Minister have each found a place in one body or the other. The Cooperative Enquiry Committee, the Ravenshaw College Governing Body, the Medical School Committee, the Engineering School Committee, the Girls' School Committee, the nominations to the Municipality of Puri, the appointments of the non-official visitors to the Gaols are only a few of the many instances of favouritism and nepotism sedulously practised by the Chief Minister.

(g) On the top of all these there are complaints against the Chief Minister of chronic laziness, delay in the disposal of files, undue interference in the little matters of administration. One very recent instance of this may be cited. The brother of the Chief Minister got a false case instituted by the Police against some recalcitrant ryots who did not surrender possession to him of some lands in the village of Baunsta in the Athagarh Estate. The case was instituted by the Police before the Kodala Magistrate and trial began in the ordinary course although both the Police Prosecutor and the Presiding Magistrate knew that the case was a framed one. But still they could not summon enough courage to denounce it as fabrication as the Chief Minister was interested. The accused complained to the Deputy Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police. The latter officer, an Englishman of high integrity, instituted an enquiry through the C.I.D. staff and the enquiry revealed that the case was false from the start. He therefore ordered the withdrawal of the case. The Chief Minister at this stage sent an express telegram forbidding the withdrawal. What development this episode will ultimately assume we cannot now anticipate. But many of us begin to think that we are reverting to mediaeval times. We cannot openly criticise the Chief Minister for fear of disciplinary action.

(h) A police constable at Surada was assaulted by a Congressman because he had the temerity to challenge the Congressman committing nuisance on a public road. The constable obtained a medical certificate and reported to the Sub-Inspector, who put up a charge-sheet. But then came the command of the Chief Minister not to prosecute. The constable preferred a private complaint against the accused and the accused was convicted and we could not bring this [to] public light.

This letter has become too long and I could multiply it further. In the next instalment I propose to advert to the crippleness of the much vaulted civil liberties, the institution of the cases against reputed public workers, the attempts made to muzzle the Press in Orissa, and other matters. I and hundreds of real Congress workers and sympathisers of this Province earnestly desire that an

enquiry, patient and thorough, should be made into these allegations which are made with genuine sorrow and with the hope that a corrective may be found.

Yours very sincerely,  
Chintamani Misra  
Editor, *Lokamata*

*Enclosure 2:*

(Copy of Vallabhbhai Patel's letter to Biswanath Das)

Purushottam Bldg.  
Opp. Opera House  
Bombay-4  
12th August 1938

My dear Biswanath Das,

After having had consultation with you on the 8th and 9th instant at Wardha and having gone through all the papers in connection with Madras Estate Land (Orissa Amendment) Bill, 1937, we have come to a conference with the Zamindars concerned as desired.

We agree that it would somewhat be awkward for you at this stage after the Bill has been passed by the Assembly and submitted for the approval of the Viceroy to have a conference of this nature, but we feel that you as Government must be prepared to give a patient hearing to the people whenever there is a genuine demand from any of them for such a purpose. In the conference you can put the Government point of view firmly and confront the Zamindars with facts and figures justifying your position. You may make it clear that your agreeing to meet them in a conference must not be understood to mean that you are prepared to go behind the vote of the Assembly and enter into some sort of a settlement with the Zamindars unless the action of the Government is proved to be economically unjust or legally unsound. You can easily prove that you have adopted a basis which is just and proper in passing the Bill inasmuch as it brings as nearly as possible a uniformity of system and give them a concession of two annas more than the Roitwari system. You can also point out to them by facts and figures the utter incapacity of the poor miserable tenants to pay anything more than the rent paid by those in the adjoining Roitwari area. But you will please see that you make no statement which cannot be supported by facts and figures.

It is possible that the people who wish to see that the power of the Congress is destroyed may not [be] able to see your point of view. But you can justly point out to them the growing discontent amongst the tenants who are forming separate and rival kisan organisations for the protection of their rights on the ground that the Congress would not be able to do them justice.

Nobody can expect you to agree to any arbitrary method of adjustment but if they can show any just and reasonable bases for reduction than what should have been provided in the Bill you are bound to consider their point of view, no matter if the legislation is passed.

We would, therefore, advise you to agree to invite the proposed conference and attend it, but we would suggest that you may do so on condition that Babu Rajendra Prasad, a member of the Parliamentary Board, is allowed to attend and take part in this conference.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

68. *To a Raja*

Wardha  
August 25, 1938

My dear Raja Bahadur,

I have received your letters dated the 7th and 12th August after my return to Wardha from Madras. I got your telegram asking me to stop at Rambha and replied to you that I was returning to Wardha and not passing that way. Please therefore excuse the delay in acknowledging your letters.

I remember the conversation I had with you at Delang. Some days ago Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and I had a talk with the Hon'ble Mr. Biswanath Das who came to Wardha to see us. We have advised him to agree to have a conference with the zamindars as desired. It is undoubtedly somewhat awkward after a Bill has [been] passed to have a conference. But we felt that a popular Government should not avoid meeting the representatives of any interest that felt [aggrieved] by its action without in any way committing itself beforehand to any particular view. So I expect there would [be] a conference and if it is necessary and I am required I may also attend it.

My experience in Bihar has not been quite happy. Neither the zamindars nor the tenants are quite satisfied and there a great agitation [is] going on against the settlement which I brought about. So we cannot be sure what would come out of the conference but there is no harm in making an attempt. If the idea of the conference materialises it will not be necessary for you to take the trouble of coming here to meet me. We shall discuss the point when we meet.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

69. *To Bhulabhai Desai*

Wardha

August 27, 1938

My dear Bhulabhai,

I have received your letter suggesting that Bipin Babu should not be allowed to accept the managership of the Bettiah Raj, but that he should continue his activities [as] at present. That has been my own view which I had formed after discussing the matter with him some months ago and I have not changed my opinion. The difficulties [were] created by the Congress workers in Champaran who are keen on having him as manager and who are not dissuaded after what Bipin Babu and I have told them. I understand the Government has decided to make the offer to him and have probably already made the offer to Bipin Babu personally. I understand they have written to me also, as Bipin Babu expressed the view that if I insisted he would carry out my wishes. The letter has, however, not reached me because I understand Babu Biswanath Singh, a prominent worker of Champaran, has asked to be permitted to bring the letter personally to me, so that he might get a chance of pressing me to advise Bipin Babu to accept it. I have, however, sent words through Krishna Ballabh Babu who came here in connection with the Bengali-Bihari controversy that I would not press Bipin Babu to accept managership. I have also showed him your letter which I received while he was. So the matter rests there. I have no intention of putting pressure on Bipin Babu and Bipin Babu has no intention of accepting the job without much pressure from me.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

70. *To Sri Krishna Sinha*

Wardha

28th August 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

Krishna Ballabh Babu must have given you a report of the discussion here. You have now to fix a time and place for the next meeting when we shall finally decide the matter. Please fix both the time and place according to your convenience. I shall of course expect [a] detailed reply to all the points raised including particularly the law point on which Mr. Das has laid much emphasis. If his view of the law is correct then no other question arises, as all rules restricting admission to services etc. to provincials and excluding non-provincials are *ultra vires* and illegal. Therefore, I want to be assisted if there is a



different viewpoint also. There should be a statement on other points raised also.

I had asked Krishna Ballabh Babu to have a statement prepared regarding the provisions of the three Bills which have been passed relating to land laws. I understand that Baldev Babu has prepared it. If so, it should be printed in large numbers and distributed broadcast. I should like to see it before it is printed. I want it to be in popular language and popular style. The effect of the law should be summarised so that the ordinary man in the street may understand it. But in order that I may understand the effect correctly and test its accuracy I should like to have copies of the Bills as ultimately passed and a copy of the law as it is before the Bills become law. Will you kindly have these sent to me as soon as possible so that I may look into the thing and the leaflet may be published soon. I am receiving many letters protesting against the distraint provisions. These should be particularly dealt with in it.

I have to trouble you about one Congress worker whom you may be knowing. This is Babu Chandrika Singh of Chapra who has been associated with Babu Narayan Prasad Sinha in all his good work all these years. I know Chandi is a man of sacrifice and much capacity. He is in great financial difficulty at present and needs a suitable employment. I have been thinking of several things for him. He may very well do in the Village Uplift Department. He can be equally successful as a Propaganda Officer on behalf of the Government in the Prohibition Department. He can also be employed in the Court of Wards Department in some Estate. I think he can also be entrusted with organisation of labour. This last has to be done by the Congress and not by the Government. May I request you to consider his case and give him a suitable post? I know we are all liable to be misunderstood in matters of employment, but I do not think there can be any misunderstanding in a case like his. Anyway I am prepared to take the risk of recommending him. You may send for him from the Yogi office and discuss the matter, if you consider it necessary. Perhaps Anugrah Babu might also be helpful and I am sending a copy of this letter to him also and save the trouble of having to write a separate letter.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

P.S. I wrote to you some time ago that the Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga had been writing to me that a statement might be issued under our signature advising payment of rent. I think it is possible to include it in the statement mentioned above. If so, it may be incorporated. Otherwise, a separate appeal may be issued. Advising zamindars to carry out the terms of the agreement, particularly those relating to non-settlement of *bakhast* lands, non-realisation of *abwabs*, grant of receipts, etc. should be issued. They have agreed to do so. Will you please have drafts made and get them approved by the zamindars? This should be done soon. Perhaps it would be better to have these appeals separated from a pamphlet explaining the provisions of the new law.

My dear Anugrah Babu, please consider the case of Chandrika Babu and see if anything can be done. You may talk to him and find what suits him best.

What are you doing about the Local Self-Govt. Act? Are you amending it to give reservation of seats with joint electorate to Musalmans? Maulana suggested that he might come to Patna and settle this after talking with Musalmans. Again, are [you] giving franchise to Vidyapeeth students? This should at least be done for them.

71. *To the General Secretary, All India Congress Committee, Delhi*

Delhi

2nd September 1938

Dear Sir,

I beg to submit herewith my report on the Bengali-Bihari controversy which was referred to me by the Working Committee which met at Wardha from 23rd to 27th of July 1938.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Enclosure not included.

72. *From Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Minister of Finance, Bihar*

Ranchi

6th September 1938

My dear Sir,

I received your letter dated the 31st of August 1938, the day before yesterday. I am sending you all the information that you have called for by separate post which will be despatched tomorrow. I understand copies of the Bills passed by Bihar Legislature have already been sent to you; and Krishna Ballabh Babu is preparing a note on the agrarian laws which will be forwarded as soon as it is completed.

Sri Babu is here and your letter reached him. We shall be going to Delhi on 19th as already arranged.

Trusting this finds you in good health,

Yours sincerely,  
A.N. Sinha

Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

73. *From J.B. Kripalani*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Swaraj Bhawan  
Allahabad  
September 7, 1938

Dear Friend,

I am sending you herewith a copy of the relevant portion of Shri Jawaharlal's letter bearing upon the international situation and war. In view of the Anti-Recruitment Bill passed in the Central Assembly and what is happening in Europe and Asia at present, it is necessary that we make our position clear about the attitude we propose to take in the event of a world war or a war in which Britain chooses to involve itself. The Haripura resolution is of course there but further clarification may be necessary.

You may also remember that last time we decided to discuss the general question of our attitude to war and military equipment with Mahatmaji. It was then decided that two days may be set apart for this purpose at the time of the next Working Committee meeting. The Working Committee formally meets at Delhi on the 22nd. I have been advised by the President to request you to be present at Delhi a couple of days earlier, that is, on the 20th, to discuss with Bapu this important question. Bapu is expected to be in Delhi on or before the 20th.

You will please inform the Secretary, Delhi P.C.C., about the exact date and time of your arrival.

The A.I.C.C. camp office opens at Delhi on the 19th instant.

Yours sincerely,  
J.B. Kripalani

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Wardha.

Enclosure not included.

74. *From Binodanand Jha*

Camp Office, Ranchi  
8th September 1938

Dear Sir,

We have dropped the idea of starting a lottery for the hospitals. As regards other part of your letter (viz. information regarding working of the Ministry) I

did not write you earlier as I considered it necessary to place the facts before you personally. Unfortunately, I could not get any opportunity for the same till now.

I want to trouble you with another case which might have been reported to you. Mr. Nurul Hassan of Darbhanga is dissatisfied on account of his not being nominated a Commissioner of Darbhanga Municipality. As the case might go to you, I am sending you a copy of the note that I submitted to H.M. bearing on the subject under his orders.

With best regards,

Yours obediently,  
Binodanand Jha

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
C/o Sjt. Seth Jamnalal Bajaj  
Wardha.

Enclosure not included.

75. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

September 9, 1938.

My dear Rajendrababu,

I have received a telegram from Nawab of Chhatari which is copied below:

SOME ZAMINDARS OF AGRA AND TALUQDARS OF OUDH WISH DISCUSS  
WITH YOU AND COLLEAGUES AGRARIAN QUESTION IN UNITED PROVINCES  
PLEASE FIX DATE AT DELHI AND WIRE NAWAB CHHATARI AT LUCKNOW.

RAJA BISHESHWAR DAYAL SETH  
NAWAB SIR MUHAMMAD YUSUF  
RAJA JAGANNATH BAKHSH SINGH  
NAWAB CHHATARI

My reply to him as under has been sent today:

YOUR WIRE CAN MEET YOU AT DELHI 21ST—VALLABHBHAI

The Working Committee begins on the 22nd, so I have given the 21st and we shall all have to reach Delhi on that day.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Bajaj Wadi, Wardha (C.P.).

76. From K.P. Sinha, I.C.S.

Collector's House  
Laheriasarai  
Darbhanga  
10th/12th September 1938

Dear Rajendra Babu,

I am enclosing a cutting of the *Searchlight* dated 25th August last in connection with certain difference between the office-bearers of All India Spinners' Association, Bihar Branch, Madhubani, and Mr. Krishnan, S.D.O. of Madhubani. I am sorry to trouble you during the present stage of your health which, I earnestly hope, is now improving, but as I understand that you are in charge of the activities of the All India Spinners' Association in this Province, I have no option. The first cause of friction which occurred was during the floods of last year. Babu Lakshmi Narayan was in charge of Madhubani Khadi Bhandar, and was not known to the S.D.O. at that time. He went with a certain number of villagers to the S.D.O., and demanded a boat for them. Previously these villagers had refused to vacate their village, and wanted a boat to be kept at their disposal so that they might vacate whenever they liked. As the number of relief boats was limited, and could not be distributed to each village and tola, the S.D.O. rightly refused to supply a boat for being kept in the village but offered to send a boat as soon as they were prepared to evacuate. Probably the S.D.O. was somewhat tactless in the way he spoke to Babu Lakshmi Narayan. But I do not think that his intention was to insult Babu Lakshmi Narayan. After the incident I visited Madhubani and got the matter settled. Babu Lakshmi Narayan and his workers did useful work in flood relief, and they cooperated with the S.D.O. It is incorrect to say that the S.D.O. showed no intention of cooperating with the Khadi Bhandar people or the local Congress workers. About this year's alleged incident, the S.D.O. reports that the Khadi Bhandar people are in the habit of sending villagers with requisitions for boats which he tried to meet as much as possible. It is likely that the S.D.O. may have made some remark which was not relished by the persons who went with these requisitions, but I do not think that he really intended to offend. He is a well-meaning Officer, but being still a raw junior, he is apt to get excitable at times, and does not carefully choose his words. I have given him suitable advice from time to time, and I hope, now that he is gaining experience, he will be more tactful.

2. The recent incident mentioned in the press letter occurred during the counting of votes after the Madhubani municipal elections. The matter is sub judice, and the prosecution case is that a police constable, who was trying to keep out the crowd who had no business to enter the room when the counting of votes was going on by the S.D.O., was assaulted by one of the crowd who was subsequently discovered to be a clerk working in the Khadi Bhandar. As regards the bail matter, a police case had been instituted, and as the matter had not come

up before the S.D.O. in the regular way, he asked the bailor to offer bail before the police, who let out the accused on bail. Therefore, there was no question of the S.D.O. refusing bail. It appears that the matter has been misconstrued on account of previous differences. Some time ago, Babu Dhawaja Prasad Sahu had sent me a letter complaining that the Khadi Bhandar workers were not being given facilities by the Madhubani Magistracy in connection with the criminal prosecutions in which they were interested. After enquiring into the allegations, I replied to Babu Dhawaja Prasad Sahu saying that I saw no reason to consider that the Magistracy were unfriendly, but they had to follow the usual procedure, and a complainant could not expect preferential treatment merely because he was helped by the Khadi Bhandar people. Personally I think that it is not desirable for Khadi Bhandar workers to mix themselves up with such matters as their primary concern is to propagate the use of Khadi. If any aggrieved person goes to them, they should not constitute themselves to be his legal advisers, and do 'pairvi' for them in Courts, but should refer them to the police or the S.D.O. In an assault case brought by a carpenter against the local Excise Sub-Inspector, the Khadi Bhandar people appear to have tried to persuade the Excise Sub-Inspector to pay a heavy compensation which he refused. The case ultimately ended in acquittal.

3. Babu Dhawaja Prasad Sahu has somehow formed the opinion that the S.D.O. has taken aversion to all Khadi workers or weavers. I do not think that this has any basis in fact, and shows prejudice. No Government Officer can, under the present regime, think of showing aversion to anyone wearing Khadi. I know personally of some Congressmen who have been heartily cooperating with the S.D.O. in flood relief, and about whom the S.D.O. has spoken to me highly.

Hoping to be excused for this long communication, and with my best regards,

Yours very sincerely,  
K.P. Sinha

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
Bajaj Wadi  
Wardha.

Enclosure not included.

77. *From Abul Kalam Azad*

Calcutta  
September 14, 1938

RAJENDRAPRASAD  
HARIJAN COLONY  
DELHI

BARDOLOI TELEPHONED ME AFTER GIVING UNDERTAKING FOR COALITION  
MINISTRY STARTING SHILLONG TODAY SHALL INFORM YOU LATER  
ABUL KALAM AZAD

78. *From Subhas Chandra Bose*

Calcutta  
September 14, 1938

RAJENDRA PRASAD  
CARE CONGRESS  
DELHI

BARDOLOI REQUESTED OUR PRESENCE SHILLONG FOR ADVISING ON ASSAM MINISTERIAL SITUATION MAULANA LEFT TODAY MYSELF LEAVING TOMORROW MORNING SHALL INFORM DEVELOPMENTS FROM SHILLONG

SUBHASBOSE

79. *From Gopinath Bardoloi, Congress Party Leader, Assam*

Shillong  
September 14, 1938

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD  
WARDHA

ASSAM MINISTRY HAVING RESIGNED EVE NO CONFIDENCE GOVERNOR CALLED ME FORM CABINET PRAY COME ADVISE

BARDOLOI  
CONGRESS PARTY LEADER

80. *From Dr. Syed Mahmud*

Patna  
[16 September 1938]

RAJENDRA PRASAD  
KINGSWAY COLONY  
DELHI

YOUR TELEGRAM REPEATED FROM RANCHI AM UNWELL EXTREMELY SORRY CANT REACH BEFORE 17 [SHALL] DISCUSS WITH YOU AND DOCTOR ZAKIR HUSAIN ON ARRIVAL AT DELHI 24TH AND WITH PROFESSOR SHAH IN BOMBAY AFTER 28TH STOP DEBIT BILL NOT READY YET IT SEEMS NEW BUT GOOD IDEA

SYED MAHMUD

81. *To Dr. Syed Mahmud, Minister of Education, Bihar (Patna)*

Harijan Colony  
Kingsway, Delhi  
18th September 1938

My dear Dr. Mahmud,

I received your telegram in time. Prof. Shah left for Bombay on the 17th as he had some other engagement there. He could not stay beyond the 18th in any case

and as you could not come, he thought it best to go away there earlier. But he has promised to come back on the 25th or the 26th if you and Anugrah Babu could stay here and discuss the financial aspects of the recommendations of the Committee. I had a talk with Sri Babu and Anugrah Babu on the phone last night. Sri Babu will not be able to stay on but perhaps Anugrah Babu might. The A.I.C.C. will meet on the 24th, 25th and the 26th and it is possible that we may not get time to discuss this question during those days. In that case we can have a talk only on the 27th, if you and the Finance Minister would stay here till that date. I might ask Professor Shah to come here for that discussion and he is sure to come. I had mentioned the matter to Anugrah Babu and had asked him to consult you. If this proposal suits you both, you may inform Prof. Shah telegraphically and ask him to be in Delhi on the 26th or 27th. I can stay on till the 27th or even later if need be.

Doctor Zakir Husain has got some engagement in Kashmir and he is leaving Delhi on the 20th and will not return here before the end of the month but he is going to Patna to attend the Muslim Educational Conference which is meeting there on the 1st of October. You will not therefore be able to meet him in Delhi on your arrival here.

Please let me know by wire if you can stay here till the 27th so that when Anugrah Babu arrives here I may with his consent fix up an engagement for Professor Shah for the 27th.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

82. To K.P. Sinha, I.C.S. (Darbhanga)

Camp: Harijan Colony  
Kingsway  
Delhi  
20th September 1938

Dear Mr. Sinha,

I have received your letter dated 10th/12th September 1938. I have been away from the Province for some time and have not been able to keep as much touch with its affairs as I used to do formerly. I have been wholly ignorant of the incident mentioned in your letter and in the cutting from the *Searchlight* which you have sent me. I am going to make enquiries. I hope with your intervention any misunderstanding which might have arisen will be cleared and matters settled to the satisfaction of all concerned. I am hoping to meet Lakshmi Babu here, if he is permitted by doctors to undertake a journey to this place, as he has lately been suffering from typhoid. If he comes I shall be able to talk to him. But if he is unable to do so, I shall write to him. I am here till the 27th instant.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad



83. *From Gopinath Bardoloi*

Shillong  
September 21, 1938

BABU RAJENDRAPRASAD  
HARIJAN COLONY  
DELHI

NONE ACCEPTING OUR OFFER PROPOSE IMMEDIATE INCLUSION  
ALIHYDERKHAN KINDLY INTIMATE APPROVAL

BARDOLOI

84. *To K.P. Sinha, I.C.S. (Laheriasera)*

Harijan Colony  
Kingsway  
Delhi  
2nd October 1938

My dear Mr. Sinha,

In continuation of my letter dated 20th September last I have to inform you that I have had an opportunity of having a talk with Shri Lakshminarayan and Shri Dhawaja Prasad Sahu. I am assured they have no feeling against Mr. Krishnan. They have also no interest in particular cases which may go to court. But being engaged in work in villages they come across people who have been oppressed and need help. They feel that in such cases they are bound to help the party. But in doing so they have never taken any undue advantage and their interest has been confined to securing for such sufferers the help of lawyers to conduct their cases and to otherwise help them in their court work. Both these friends are public workers of long standing of over some 18 years. They are well known all over the Province and are respected not only in Congress circles but by others. Having known them and their work for many years I have naturally confidence not only in their integrity but also in their judgment. I have asked them not to intermeddle in affairs with which they are not directly concerned. But public workers are bound to come in contact with officers in many matters and it may not be possible for them to keep themselves altogether apart from all activities other than spinning and weaving. You may ask Mr. Krishnan to treat them as public-spirited citizens whose offers of help should be welcomed and not repelled. If once this attitude is adopted and they are treated with the ordinary courtesy that is due to every citizen, I am sure all the trouble will disappear.

I desire to say nothing about the merits of the case which is pending. It is unfortunate that it should have been started and it will be well to end it, if it can be done without interfering with the course of justice.

I hope if you during one of your visits to Madhubani bring about a meeting in your presence between Mr. Krishnan and these friends things will begin to move smoothly. Babu Satyanarayan Sinha, M.L.A., can be very helpful in this.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

85. *From Premchand, Contractor*

Sarayaganj, Muzaffarpur  
3rd October 1938

Sir,

Most humbly I beg to lay the following few lines for your kind perusal and any action you may be pleased to take in the matter. These lines describe how Babu Mahesh Prasad Sinha, the present Chairman, District Board, Muzaffarpur, who was lately the President of the District Congress Committee, Anand, has become the Chairman of the District Board on the Congress support, has been insistent on showing favouritism to a particular contractor in an insidious way. The Chairman is closely connected with the Chief Minister of Bihar and the contract has been let out in the name of the son of the Chief Minister.

There was a project of stone-metalling of the Sitamarhi road No. 1, from the 1st to the 6th mile and from the 34th to 37th mile. The project is likely to involve an expenditure of about one lakh and thirty thousand to be met from the Road Development account. The work was formerly given to me by the Ex-Chairman Babu Chandreshwar Prasad Narain Sinha at the rate of Rs.34 per cubic feet of Pakur stone ballast f.o.r. Muzaffarpur. For some time for want of money the project in question could not be taken up. This year the fund being available, the work has been started and the contract has been given to Babu Sheo Shankar Sinha, son of the Prime Minister of Bihar, without calling upon any tender in spite of the Govt. circular to that effect.

As I have already submitted, the contract was formerly given to me at the rate of Rs.34 per hundred cubic feet but the said contractor has now been allowed Rs.43/14/- per hundred cubic feet for the same work (vide District Engineer's letter No. 255 dated the 7th April 1938).

The Superintending Engineer, North Bihar Circle, who is deputed to control the project on behalf of the Government had received tender from other contractors who showed their readiness to do the work at the rate of Rs.35 per hundred cubic feet of Pakur stone ballast. According[ly] the Superintending Engineer wrote to the District Engineer, Muzaffarpur, in his D.O. No. 3374 directing him to ask the contractor to produce money receipt of the Railway before making any payment to him and that this fact be stipulated in his agreement. The Chairman, District

[of] the working of the District Board, Muzaffarpur, the contractor Babu Sheo Shankar Sinha did neither execute the agreement nor he deposited earnest money as demanded, but in spite of this the Chairman, District Board, permitted the contractor to collect stone metals on roadside all along and above all he advanced Rs.17,000 in May last as a reward for disobedience of the District Board order on a mere production of a certificate produced by the Sub-Overseer in charge.

There is another glaring instance of favouritism which the Chairman, District Board, Muzaffarpur, has shown to the said contractor, Babu Sheo Shankar Sinha. This relates to a case in which the Chairman has made an irregular payment to Mr. Sinha. The fact of the case is that Sheo Shankar Sinha burnt bricks in kiln at Reghai Road, for which he practically received no formal order from the District Board prior to his burning bricks there and there was no sanctioned estimate of any project to be taken up in that area in which the bricks in question were burnt. In spite of it the contractor was paid for the bricks in kiln in Reghai in the year 1937. Later on it was designed to construct a causeway in the 9th and 10th mile of the Bowal Bazar Road No. 52, to justify the payment already made to Babu Sheo Shankar Sinha to the extent of Rs.3,500 and Rs.1,000 (vide measurement book No. 549, pages 50 & 52). As the project was not included in the programme of the Earthquake Reconstruction works, the work remains to be done up till now and the bricks still lying in kiln on the roadside of the said road. Further, in order to use his balance bricks, Babu Sheo Shankar Sinha was given the work of laying, soling and edging of Sitamarhi road, which was originally given to me and I had moulded sufficient bricks on the 1st and 2nd mile of the Sitamarhi Road. The sanctioned estimate allowed carting from Muzaffarpur and I was given a schedule rate for brick supply and no extra carting was allowed to me (vide District Engineer's memo No. 19770 dated the 16th February 1937). But in spite of it the work was later on entrusted to Babu Sheo Shankar Sinha without any sufficient reason, who brought bricks from Reghai Road, a distance of 14 miles average. The Board has been put to a further loss in paying to me my claim for Rs.2,000 on account of my bricks being not taken by [the] Board as the bricks are still lying unused. Thus in all the Chairman in order to show favours to Babu Sheo Shankar Sinha wasted public money to the extent of Rs.5,000.

These are the few facts which clearly show the maladministration of the District Board of Muzaffarpur during the regime of Babu Mahesh Prasad Sinha, the present Chairman of the District Board, Muzaffarpur. This extraordinary favouritism might well [raise] some suspicion that this patronage is not without a tinge of self-interest.

As the matter stands at present it is necessary that the allegations contained in the aforesaid paragraphs should be thoroughly enquired into by an impartial officer of the Government and the allegations if found true after the said enquiry the authorities of the Board may kindly be asked to explain their conduct. In order that further misuse of power may not be repeated in this case, the

Chairman of the District Board be kindly asked to suspend all work and payment regarding this contract.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
Premchand  
Contractor

86. *To Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar (Ranchi)*

Harijan Colony  
Kingsway  
Delhi  
5th October 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

I have submitted my report about the Bengali-Bihari controversy to the Working Committee. It has decided to circulate it among its members and to take it into consideration at its next meeting. It is not to be published before the Working Committee has considered it and come to its own decision. You will please see that it does not go out from there. I showed you the draft; I have made some alterations after you left, but the original draft also should not leak out.

There will be a by-election on account of the death of Shri Chaturanan Das. You will have to fix upon a suitable candidate to contest it on behalf of the Congress. I have written to Bipin Babu and Satyanarayan Babu about it. But I am afraid Bipin Babu may not be able to attend [to] it as he has to be here from the 10th instant onwards in connection with the Income Tax Bill Select Committee. The selection should be made in time to enable the Provincial Working Committee to obtain sanction from the Parliamentary Sub-Committee.

Pandit Jawaharlalji has written to say that some very capable men are available in Europe on account of the German policy towards the Jews. They are experts in many lines and can be had on comparatively cheap terms, possibly Rs.500 a month would be quite sufficient and some may be had even cheaper. As we are planning things and need experts you may consider the advisability of taking some of these men for, say, 2 or 3 years on the contract basis. We should get really good men and I think Pandit Jawaharlal's presence in Europe may be helpful in securing such experts. I would suggest the following:

- (1) Electrical engineer,
- (2) Chemical engineer,
- (3) Industrial chemist,
- (4) All-round good chemist, and
- (5) Good business organiser.

I had a talk with Dr. Mahmud about this matter and he will consult you. I think the suggestion is worth considering. If you agree, the best thing will be to cable to Pandit Jawaharlalji or to communicate with him by air mail as he is likely to stay there for more than three weeks. If his help is to be availed of there should be no delay. I do not think you would be able to get Englishmen of the same calibre for anything less [than] three or four times the salary. These Jews are available at present because they are being driven from pillar to post.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Copy forwarded to Hon'ble Shri Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Ranchi.

87. *To Anugrah Narayan Sinha (Ranchi)*

Harijan Colony  
Kingsway  
Delhi  
6th October 1938

My dear Anugrah Babu,

While you were here I had a talk with you and Sri Babu about the Labour Enquiry Committee. I fear it is no use relying on my frail body for this difficult work which is bound to involve heavy strain. I told you that I had a talk with Thakkar Bapa and he suggested Mr. Bakhale's name as a suitable person for the Committee. Although it is not yet certain but it is possible you may get him. Thakkar Bapa has had correspondence with him and he has promised to consult Mr. N.M. Joshi, who is in Europe, by air mail and then finally give an answer. Some friends suggested to you the name of Mr. Vakil. I do not know anything about him except that he is a Professor of Economics and has written a number of books. I do not know his status also in the teaching line. You have to make sure if his appointment as Chairman will not be resented by the other two professors on the Committee, viz. Prof. Radhakamal and Prof. Saran. Please do not delay this matter as occasional strikes need to be handled and that can be done only after you have got a comprehensive policy as a result of the Committee's report.

The other day Rai Saheb Ramchandra came to see me and gave me a long cutting about the flood situation written by himself and published in the *Searchlight* recently. He brought a letter from Dr. Mahmud which I am enclosing. He was helped in his appointment by my brother and was the District Engineer of Saran before Mr. Oatley who has recently been removed by the Board. I do not know why and under what circumstances he left the Board. That of course you shall have to find out if you think of utilising his service in

connection with flood scheme or of restoring him to his own place in the district. Please treat this as private.

After you all left I had a revival of my old trouble. There has been cough accompanied with some temperature. There is no anxiety. I hope I shall get rid of it in a few days and then after a few days' rest here will think of coming to Bihar for [a] short stay.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Enclosure not included

88. *To Vallabhbhai Patel (Bombay)*

Harijan Colony  
Kingsway  
Delhi  
11th October 1938

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I have been feeling for some time that the policy [the] Congress Party has been following in the Legislatures of Provinces where the Congress happens to be in minority has been not as it should be. In the first place there is no definite policy which has been followed consistently in all such Provinces. In the second place whatever policy there has been has not been such as either to serve the interest of the people of those Provinces nor such as to enhance the reputation of the Congress. In Provinces where we are in a minority one would naturally expect the Congress Party to act as opposition. The opposition in all countries where Parliamentary Government prevails has a definite role and purpose. Its function is to point out the shortcomings in the Government policy, to be vigilant and keep watch on Government actions and generally to get its own programme accepted as far as possible by the Government of the day. If in course of time there is dissolution it gets an opportunity of winning an election. If it succeeds it forms the Government; if it fails it continues as opposition. It criticises the Government but seldom if ever tries to win over members of the other party and thus overthrow the Government and take its place. Congress opposition on the other hand has never really acted as opposition in this sense in any of the Provinces except perhaps Sind to some extent. The attempt of our Party in most Provinces has constantly been to win over members of the Government Party and thus secure a majority for itself so that it may form a Ministry. In effect its action has been not so much to consider and criticise Government measures on their merit and secure the adoption of its own programme by the Government but to try somehow or other to oust the Party in power. The result as was to be

expected has been to create much bitterness against the Congress without any corresponding gain. We have been more anxious to become Ministers than to get our programme adopted. My feeling is that if we had acted purely as an opposition accepting the Party in power for the time being as the Government and ourselves as the opposition we would have commanded more respect and we would have succeeded to a great extent in getting our programme acted upon by the Ministry in power and we would have thus served the people much better. Instead of doing this we have been wasting all our time and energy in trying to win over people of doubtful integrity by doubtful means. This has had its reactions and created prejudice against our organisation. Even a good suggestion from us is apt to be looked upon with suspicion and hardly any chance of being accepted. It has had its effect in Congress Provinces so that even good things done by Congress Ministries are discounted and suspected. The Musalmans as a body have been alienated and in spite of all that Congress Ministries have been doing to be just and even generous to them there is not only no recognition but positive opposition to even a good scheme like the Wardha Scheme. I think if we had not been engaged in breaking or at least discrediting Muslim Ministries in non-Congress Provinces the position would have been different. The Muslim League propaganda has gained much strength on account of this attitude of Congress in Muslim Provinces. I therefore think that the policy which we have so far followed needs to be considered and revised. The Congress must decide definitely to act only as opposition in a constitutional way in those Provinces. It may move votes of non-confidence as every opposition does but only for the purpose of voicing its protest in an emphatic way in case the Ministry does anything particularly objectionable. It should not try to win over members from [the] other Party simply to be able to secure the Ministry for itself. It should definitely give up the attempt of wrecking Ministries and securing them for itself. This can be done if we decide that we can form a Ministry only if we had definite reliable majorities. It may of course happen that a Ministry may become so unpopular that its supporters may withdraw their support and when that happens the Congress may be asked and may even consent to form a Ministry. That will however be a very different situation from what we see when definite attempt is made on behalf of the Congress to obtain a Ministry for itself. I think our policy of drift has created a very unenviable situation. I am very uneasy about the position in Assam. I do not know how we can justify the action of a Speaker in adjourning the Assembly and thus enabling the Congress Ministry there to function until the 1st of December by avoiding a vote of non-confidence. The *ad interim* Ministries did no more than this and we rightly blamed them. Then again I do not know what a Prime Minister can do with five non-Congress colleagues in the Cabinet and a very doubtful majority if at all in the Assembly. It is doubtful how far even those members are dependable who are in the Congress at present. If the Congress succeeds at all in breaking the Bengal Ministry it will be in a worse position there. It will form a Ministry but in that Ministry a majority in the Cabinet will be of non-Congressmen and a majority in the Party may also be of

non-Congressmen. I do not know of what use such a Ministry will be [from] the Congress point of view. These have been the considerations that have been troubling me and I would request you to give your thought to them and if you consider proper to put them up before the Parliamentary Sub-Committee and the Working Committee of the All India Congress Committee.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

89. *To Vallabhbhai Patel*

Harijan Colony  
Kingsway  
Delhi  
11th October 1938

My dear Vallabhbhai,

When I was sitting at Birla House for the last meeting of the Working Committee on the night of the 2nd inst., I was feeling unwell. Before I left you I had a sensation of feverishness. Cough was also there and both developed and fever continued till the 8th and cough is still continuing. I am staying here as I consider the climate suitable. When I get better I propose to go to Bihar. There is of course no anxiety. I hope you have got rid of your cough and are better now.

Last night I received a telegram from Mr. Khawaja Abdul Mazdid which runs as follows:

CALLING ZAMINDARS CONFERENCE 15TH 16TH ALLAHABAD AMICABLE  
SETTLEMENT LIKELY YOUR PRESENCE ESSENTIAL KINDLY ASK PANTJI  
POSTPONE INTRODUCTION TENANCY BILL WIRE ARRIVAL

I have replied to him this morning as follows:

RECEIVED SORRY UNWELL PLEASE COMMUNICATE VALLABHBHAI  
MAULANA AZAD STOP CONSIDERING RAJA MAHESHWAR DAYAL SETHS  
SPEECH SITAPUR CHANCES AGREEMENT REMOTE

The speech of Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth mentioned in my telegram is published in paper and I am enclosing a cutting. I do not know what has to be done in this matter and whether you have received any reply to your letter to the Nawab of Chhatari. If you think any useful purpose will be served by my going to Allahabad kindly wire to me. If I am well I may stop at Allahabad on my way to Patna. I would however like to avoid going there both for the sake of my health and because I do not expect any good can come out of it. I am communicating to Pantji.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Enclosure not included.



90. *To Govind Ballabh Pant, Prime Minister, United Provinces (Lucknow)*

Harijan Colony  
Kingsway  
Delhi  
11th October 1938

My dear Pantji,

I have received a telegram to the following effect from Khawaja [Abdul] Mazdid of Allahabad:

CALLING ZAMINDARS CONFERENCE 15TH 16TH ALLAHABAD AMICABLE  
SETTLEMENT LIKELY YOUR PRESENCE ESSENTIAL KINDLY ASK PANTJI  
POSTPONE INTRODUCTION TENANCY BILL WIRE ARRIVAL

to which I have replied as follows:

RECEIVED SORRY UNWELL PLEASE COMMUNICATE VALLABHBHAI  
MAULANA AZAD STOP CONSIDERING RAJA MAHESHWAR DAYAL SETHS  
SPEECH SITAPUR CHANCES AGREEMENT REMOTE

You will recollect the reply which Sardar Vallabhbhai sent to Nawab of Chhatari's letter. I do not know what reply has been received from him but judging from the report of the speech delivered by Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth at Sitapur it does not appear that any agreed settlement is possible. In any case I will not like to attend any Conference unless you wish me to do so. I have communicated this telegram and my reply to Sardar. I am here for a few days more and if there is anything you would like me to do you will please write to me here.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

91. *From Choithram Sidhwa*

Karachi  
October 11, 1938

RAJENDRA PRASAD  
HARIJAN COLONY  
DELHI

SIND MINISTRY OFFERED FOLLOWING COMPROMISE QUOTE ONLY POINT IN  
DISPUTE IS ABOUT REGROUPING CONGRESS HIGH COMMANDS VIEW IS THAT  
THOSE ORDERS BE POSTPONED FOR ONE YEAR BEFORE THIS MINISTERS  
ATTITUDE WAS VERY FIRM THAT THOSE ORDERS WERE FINAL AND COULD NOT  
BE REOPENED BUT NOW IN DEFERENCE WISHES HIGH COMMAND MINISTERS

WOULD PREPARED TO LOOK INTO CASE OF EACH AREA INDIVIDUALLY AND DECIDE ON PROVED FACTS WHETHER PROMOTION OF EACH AREA TO HIGHER CLASS JUSTIFIED AND IF IN ANY CASE THERE DO NOT APPEAR ANY COGENT GROUNDS FROM RECORD FOR PROMOTING THAT PARTICULAR AREA TO HIGHER CLASS SAME WILL BE DENOTED TO ORIGINAL CLASS MINISTERS ARE ANXIOUS TO SEE NO INJUSTICE TAKES PLACE AND THESE FINAL ORDERS WILL BE PASSED BEFORE ASSESSMENT FOR CURRENT YEAR AS ACTUALLY MADE THIS WILL BE CONSIDERED AS ONE OF IMPORTANT ITEMS IN CONNECTION WITH WHICH MINISTERS HAVE TO CONSULT LEADER CONGRESS PARTY ACCORDING TO FORMULA AGREED TO BETWEEN SARDAR PATEL AND MINISTERS UNQUOTE ABOVE COMPROMISE OFFERED MEETS SUBSTANTIALLY CONGRESS DEMAND REJECTION COMPROMISE WILL CREATE SERIOUS SITUATION STOP OWING MUSLIM LEAGUE CONFERENCE RESOLUTION AND AGGRESSIVELY VIOLENT COMMUNAL SPEECHES ATMOSPHERE TENSE STOP UNLESS ASSURANCE OF SUPPORT OF CONGRESS PARTY GIVEN TO PRESENT MINISTRY ESTABLISHMENT OF LEAGUE MINISTRY IS ALMOST CERTAINTY STOP SERIOUS REACTIONS LIKELY TO FOLLOW HERE ESTABLISHMENT LEAGUE MINISTRY IN PRESENT ATMOSPHERE WITH LIKELY REPERCUSSIONS ELSEWHERE STOP STRONGLY URGE ACCEPTANCE MINISTRYS OFFER TO AVOID FURTHER COMPLICATIONS STOP JINNAH INVITED ALL MUSLIM MEMBERS TO ARRIVE AT FINAL DECISION TOMORROW STOP EARLIEST DECISION THEREFORE ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL STOP SEE RAJENDRABABU PERSONALLY

CHOITHRAM SIDHWA

92. *From Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar*

Amawan Palace  
Mussoorie  
12 October 1938

Dear Rajendra Babu,

While at Delhi I got fever. It seems I was having fever during the last few days of my stay there. On my return to Patna I remained confined to bed for a few days and then went to Ranchi. This relapse rendered me very weak and so I have come to Mussoorie for a change. I intend to stay here till the 26th.

I am in receipt of your letter dated the 5th. I do not think the report will go out before it is actually released by you for publication. However, it is with Anugrah Babu and I am writing to him to be careful about it.

I think the 7th of November will be fixed for filing of nomination paper for the by-election and we should be able to select a suitable candidate before that date. I am writing to Anugrah Babu and to Satyanarayan Babu about it.

I am also writing to Anugrah Babu about the appointment of experts. Dr. Mahmud Sahib must have reached Ranchi by this time. Anugrah Babu will send you a reply after consulting him.

Yours sincerely,  
S.K. Sinha

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
Harijan Colony  
Kingsway, Delhi.

93. *From A.N. Khuwaja*

Jamalistan  
Allahabad  
12th October 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I got your telegram last evening about an hour after the meeting of the Working Committee of the U.P. Zamindar Sabha. Thank you for the letter just received. As you might have read in this morning's paper the Committee decided to hold the conference here on the 16th. I got two telegrams sent to you and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Your telegram has again been sent to Patna. We could not send one to Sardar Vallabhbhai as we do not know his whereabouts or address. Could you kindly oblige me and us all by wiring to him and requesting him to come here on the 16th and to honour me by putting up with me as I have asked you and Maulana.

As regards Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth's speech at Sitapur, it does not worry us in the least. I have now been working amongst the Zamindars for the last year or more and I have tried to scientifically analyse their mentality. The worst that can happen in the conference is that the bigger or some of the bigger Talukdars of Oudh may disagree. Agra Zamindars and Oudh Zamindars and some of the Talukdars also would agree to arbitration. Although as Working Committee could not record a resolution it was clear that all agreed with me that Zamindars should agree to arbitration. I have been working for an amicable settlement and nobody would be more sorry than I if it does not come about.

I feel that I am as good a Congressman as anyone else. At the same time I feel that the proposed tenancy legislation is bound to make the position of the tenant worse than it is. No attempt is being made to materially improve his lot. The proposals are not a solution of the agrarian problem of this Province. This may be called a superficial patchwork. I want something real. This merely punishes the Zamindar and does no corresponding good to the tenants. I claim to know the Zamindari problems better than most of the members of the Congress Party in U.P. My personal interest is negligible and I am prepared to give what proof you may require of sacrificing that little also. But I feel for two reasons against the proposals: (i) that they furnish no solution of the agrarian problem and will do no substantial good to the tenants, (ii) they are intrinsically very unnecessary. If the lot of the tenants could be improved at the cost of the Zamindars, by all means do so. My ideas are entirely different, even revolutionary. I am not prepared to admit that they are impracticable. I can demonstrate them and prove them.

My dear Rajendra Babu, I feel my position as rather an awkward one. I have made an appointment with Mahatmaji to meet him at Segaoon on the first Saturday and Sunday of November. I shall discuss matters with him and then decide what I personally should do. In [the] meantime I want you to help me. I

was very sorry to hear that you have not been well. I pray to God not only for your speedy recovery but for your long and healthy life to serve our motherland. Mahmud (Dr. Syed) can tell you what I think of you.

On your way back if you can break journey here for even a few hours I shall be very proud and pleased.

Praying for your health, with kindest regards.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,  
A.N. Khuwaja

P.S. Nawab Chhatari, Baghpatt and many others have asked me to try for the postponement of the introduction of the Bill for the consideration of Select Committee Report. And I think it would be better if it were postponed. I am going to write to Pantji but if you would also do so I shall feel obliged. Maulana has not answered to my telephone yet. He had promised to come also to advise for the postponement.

A.N. Khuwaja

94. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

Purushottam Building  
Opp. Opera House  
Bombay 4  
October 13, 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I got your letter of the 11th October. Khawaja Abdul Mazdid wired to me also today to the same effect. I had received a letter from Nawab of Chhatari [a] couple of days ago saying that he will place that matter before his Council and communicate to me its decision as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to ask for the postponement of legislation on the strength of Khawaja's telegram; besides, it is evident that they are not united.

I had tried to get you on the phone about the Sind affair, but you were asleep and I talked [to] Devidas about it. I got your wire just now and as Maulana is sticking to Wardha decision nothing can be done in that matter.

I have also received your other letter regarding our attitude in the minority Provinces. I shall discuss that when we meet next time. Although I do not agree with you in your analysis of the situation, the aggressive attitude of the Muslim League is not the result of our policy of drift, resulting in the Congress parties in Assam and Bengal trying to break the Muslim ministries. What they want to do is to have the League Minister in the Congress Ministry and as they could not

succeed in that they got angry. However I shall talk about it when we meet next time.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Harijan Colony  
Kingsway, Delhi.

*Enclosure:*

(Copy of telegram from Vallabhbhai Patel to Khawaja Abdul Mazdid)

Bombay-4  
13 October 1938

KHAWAJA ABDULMAZDID

YOUR WIRE NAWAB CHHATARI PROPOSES PLACING MATTER BEFORE LANDLORDS COUNCIL FOR DECISION RAJA MAHESHWARDAYAL VIOLENTLY OPPOSED ARBITRATION UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES CANNOT INTERFERE NORMAL LEGISLATIVE PROCEEDINGS ADVISE YOU APPROACH PREMIER DIRECT

VALLABHBHAI

95. *To Biswanath Das*

Harijan Colony  
Kingsway, Delhi  
14th October 1938

My dear Biswanath Babu,

I have received a letter from Shri Banamali Bahera, Inspector of Police, Rairangpur, Mayurbhanj State, who has approached you with a memorial for a suitable stipend for his son Shri Durga Madhava Bahera, now a student in England. It seems that he has incurred much expense in educating his son who has obtained a B.Sc. degree of Durham University in Agriculture. The Government were good enough to offer [a] scholarship of £100 yearly for two years to enable him to qualify further in Agriculture or Horticulture. The fellow is unable to meet the balance of expenses and fears that even after his return he may not get [a] suitable appointment in the Agriculture Department. I do not know either the father or his son but since it is a case of a student who has already obtained a degree in Agriculture and whose services the Government may find useful to employ in the Agriculture Department may I request you to look into the matter and see if anything can be done to help him. Hoping to be excused for intrusion.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

96. *From Radhakant Malaviya*

18 Hamilton Road  
Allahabad  
15th October 1938

Sir,

I am desired by my client Maharajkumar Srinivas Prasad Singh to send you his memorial in connection with the disclosure of papers which are with the Bihar Government. As the final date for hearing of his suit in the Calcutta High Court will be fixed on the 11th November 1938 it is requested that the matter should receive your immediate attention.

A copy of this letter has been sent to your Delhi address also.

Yours sincerely,  
Radhakant Malaviya

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
Member, Parliamentary Sub-Committee  
Wardha.

*Enclosure:*

(Copy of memorial from Maharajkumar Srinivas Prasad Singh regarding the disclosure of papers in the possession of the Bihar Government in connection with Dumraon Raj Appeal Case)

Sir,

When I had the honour of meeting you and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Chairman, Parliamentary Sub-Committee, at Wardha both you and he were pleased to tell me that on my representation it was decided that the Bihar Government would not claim privilege in respect of the papers they have with them in connection with the appeal case and the same will be given to me as and when required without any difficulty. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Sahab also was pleased to inform that I shall get the papers I required but I regret to inform you that your directions are not being carried out and the Solicitor to the Government of Bihar who is representing the Member of Board of Revenue has informed my Solicitor that the Court of Wards will disclose the papers only on condition that I should blindly admit the execution of all the papers they have so far produced and also such papers as they may produce. I hope you will agree with me in considering the condition imposed to be most unreasonable. It is impossible for an outsider to know what the initials are and what department a particular person was representing at the time. Ends of justice require that according to your directions as mentioned to me the Bihar Government should be pleased to disclose all the papers in their possession without imposing any

condition and should leave it to the parties concerned, to us, such of them as they may require.

One other question also I would request you to consider. However bad had been the conduct of high Government officials in 1912 in my suit I have not asked for any relief against any officer or against the Government, yet with a view to help the present Maharaja, defendant, Government money is being spent in fighting against me. Will you be pleased to enquire from what source the money is being spent and why? Could you make an enquiry as to how much money has been spent after the Congress Government came in power and how much money had to be spent on counsel from Calcutta who was taken for cross-examining plaintiff's witnesses at Chapra and Ranchi? Would you also be pleased to enquire that in case I succeed in my suit and get costs awarded from the contesting defendants then from what source I shall be paid and whether it will be a proper use of public money to spend it in a litigation with the result of which the public is not concerned? As a matter of public policy is involved I shall request you to have the advice of Mahatma Gandhi in this. In any case I shall feel highly obliged if you will, after making an enquiry, favour me with your reply early so that if necessary I may take the opportunity of placing the entire facts before Mahatma Gandhi who I am confident will help justice to be done to a poor man even against a Maharaja Bahadur.

Your obedient servant,  
Srinivas Prasad Singh

97. *From Vallabhbai Patel*

Camp: Bardoli  
October 15, 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

I sent you a scrappy reply to your letter of the 11th October 1938. I feel I must answer you more fully. It is not true that our difficulties have arisen on account of our people being anxious to become ministers in minority Provinces. It is true that attempts to win over people from the opposition would necessarily expose the ministry in those Provinces to the danger of a fall and thereby we incur their odium and enrage them, but this is inherent in the situation of our country where communal electorates have been the basis of the constitution. In my opinion, if our people were to remain merely in opposition in those Provinces, the minority community would be terribly injured at the hands of the Congress. It would be proper then not to have anything to do with the legislatures in those Provinces, in which case the minority would be able to look after itself and we would not be dividing its forces. Take for instance [the] Province of Sind. Today in the name of Congress principle which, in my opinion, [is] not at all at issue, the Congress Party of ten members divides the Hindu strength in the Province and makes the group of Hindu representatives absolutely ineffective. If we were to withdraw our

members from the Assembly nine more members would be returned on the Hindu ticket to make its strength complete. They would then be free to form a coalition with a less reactionary group of Muslims and form their own ministry. Today we are deliberately driving the Hindu community in a corner and force a rank reactionary communal ministry on the Province. Poor Allahbaksh has been crying hoarse for our help. We prefer to stand as ineffective spectators, but indirectly bringing down his fall, so as to facilitate the formation of a League Ministry, which has not existed in India anywhere up to now. In my opinion, it is nothing but a process of suicide. The Muslim communal leaders have not spared us for our obliging attitude towards them. The Premier of Bengal and other Muslim leaders have made speeches in Karachi for which they would be liable to be held up under Sections 153-A and 124-A of the I.P. Code in any Province.

It is not true that we have no policy in the minority Provinces. The fact is that on the communal question our decisions in all matters rest with Maulana Saheb and these Provinces are also under his charge. In Punjab we have done nothing to guide or advise in any matter and we have left the decisions of the Province entirely to Maulana Saheb. He has even directed the Congress Party to vote with the Government on [any] obnoxious measure. In Bengal Mr. Huq meets him almost [every] other day and he himself being on the spot naturally is in sole charge. There is no other minority Province so far as I know.

Recently trouble has arisen in Assam, but Assam is not a minority Province. We have got the biggest single group in the Assembly. The Hindu community is not in a minority there. If we were not to form a coalition ministry like this we would be surrendering the Province to the tender mercies of communal, reactionary, corrupt groups and we would be guilty of doing [a] grave injustice to the majority community there. In our country where the constitution is based on communal electorate, we cannot expect to have peace with the minority, which is aggressive and which is bent upon coercing the majority and to compel it to accept its own terms. In fact the Communal Award was intended for that purpose. If your suggestion is to be accepted, we must clear out from Bengal, Punjab, Sind, and perhaps Assam. I would prefer that course rather than compel our groups in the Assemblies there to be mere critics. Once it is known that our people can only criticise and can never accept ministries in those Provinces, either on their own responsibility or by coalition, the other groups in the Assembly will cease to take them seriously at all. There would therefore be no dissolution of the House on any occasion.

If you suggest that we have been adopting means which are doubtful in winning over people [to] our side, undoubtedly it would be wholly wrong, but if you say that we succeed in winning doubtful people, I do not think our people are in the wrong, because almost the whole lot of them are doubtful people and it is up to us to prevent the Province being ruled by the people of doubtful character either by taking them under our control or by influencing them.

The Muslims as a body have been alienated and they are opposed even to our good [schemes], not because we are opposing them in minority Provinces, and



make their position precarious, but because they feel and rightly feel that in spite of the Communal Award they have not been able to prevent the formation of Congress Ministries in seven Provinces without or in spite of them. They expected to rule the country, but they have been sadly disappointed. If you accept Muslim ministers in the seven Cabinets from the Muslim League groups, you will soon find that they would not oppose schemes like the Wardha Scheme, but the price that you will have to pay for it will be to abandon nationalism once for all. You say that the Congress must decide definitely to act as opposition in a constitutional way in the minority Provinces, but we do not act unconstitutionally at all, nor do I know what you mean by those Provinces. Do you suggest that in Sind or in Assam we must not disturb Ministries or if they are disturbed by our votes we must not do anything further? If this is your view, indeed our policy must be clearly defined. I can understand our not taking the responsibility of forming the coalition ministry, though I do not consider it a wise thing, but I cannot understand our refusing to lend our support to a less reactionary ministry when we have to choose between two evils.

I do not think that you should be uneasy about our position in Assam. On the contrary, if we had left the field open after defeating the previous Ministry, we would have succeeded in establishing the old reactionary, corrupt ministry more firmly than before. Why was the vote of censure moved at all by our people if that was our object?

In my opinion this is committing suicide with vengeance. Whether the conduct of the Speaker in the Assam Assembly is fair or unfair, is not an issue at all. It is a separate thing which can be considered separately. I see no serious objection in a Congress Prime Minister taking other non-Congress colleagues with him and run the administration with confidence if he is allowed a free hand. But I see serious objection in having even one non-Congressman in any Cabinet composed of Congress members, if the one non-Congressman tries to influence successfully the policy of the Congress Ministry according to his will.

In Bengal also the condition is different. Many responsible non-Congressmen have told me that if Bengal is to be saved at all, we must form a coalition ministry soon. I see your point of view fully, but the present state of things, if allowed to continue, will ruin Bengal for ever. You must see the other side and then make your choice between two evils.

I am disturbed to hear that you are still having fever. It seems that a little more strain affects your health and puts you out of action. You must get out of this by taking prolonged rest and once for all recover your normal health.

I have come here for the final meeting of the Reception Committee to wind up our affairs and I propose to stay here for about four days.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Harijan Colony  
Delhi.

98. *To Subhas Chandra Bose (Calcutta)*

Harijan Colony  
Kingsway  
— Delhi —  
16 October 1938

My dear Subhasbabu,

I hope you have now recovered fully from the effects of malaria which you developed in Bombay. I do not know what effect your Assam visit will have on you. I can only hope and pray that it may not aggravate the malaria. I have got rid of my fever and cough and am proposing to go to Patna on the 23rd or 24th instant.

I think you will be making some arrangement for organising the office of the Planning Committee. I read in the papers that the Government of Bombay will place the services of an officer at the disposal of the Committee to work as its Secretary. I suppose you will require some assistants to help him in carrying on the work. There is one young man named Shri G. G. Gokhale who is [an] M.A. in journalism and is bright and industrious. In case you need a man of that type you might give him a trial and I may send him to you for an interview if you so require.

Hoping this finds you all right,

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

99. *From Sri Krishna Sinha, Premier, Bihar*

Amawan Palace  
Mussoorie  
17 October 1938

Dear Rajendra Babu,

I am in receipt of your letter dated the 14th. The original intention was to fix the 31st of October for nomination. Perhaps Satyanarain Babu has written to you on that information. When I was coming to Mussoorie I had asked Mr. Das to shift forward the dates by a week. Today I had a talk with Anugrah Babu on the phone and I have requested him to fix 15th of November as suggested by you. I hope we shall have time now to select a candidate. Bipin Babu wrote to me yesterday about fixing up of the date for the meeting of the Working Committee. He wrote to me that some date between the 4th and 10th of November would be suitable. I had a talk with Anugrah Babu about the date and he suggests 7th of November for the meeting of the Working Committee. I think the meeting of the

Working Committee may be held on the 7th. Anugrah Babu will be at Patna at the time of the meeting, but I would like to be absent if you permit. I am still feeling very weak and so I do not expect to reach Ranchi before the 31st of this month. After I reach there, I have to visit some of the places in Chhotanagpur. The complaint of the people of Chhotanagpur has been that we do not try to come in contact with the people. It is because of this that I want to go about for a few days before I return to Patna. If you think that I must be at Patna on the 7th then I will certainly do it though it will be some strain on my health as to come to Patna and again go to Ranchi is a tiresome affair. I request you kindly to let me know what you think so that I might act accordingly.

Yours sincerely,  
S.K. Sinha

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
Harijan Sevak Sangh  
Kingsway  
Delhi.

100. *From Ramashanker Tewary*

Sasaram  
18th October 1938

DESHPUJYA RAJENBABU  
HINDUSTAN TIMES DELHI

DALMIANAGAR COMPLETE STRIKE HUNDRED SEVENTY ARRESTED LATHI  
CHARGE RESORTED FIRING FEARED YOUR INTERVENTION SOLICITED

RAMASHANKER TEWARY ENGR

101. *From Anugrah Narayan Sinha*

Ranchi  
19th October 1938

BABU RAJENDRAPRASAD  
HARIJAN COLONY  
KINGSWAY  
DELHI

POLICE ASSAULTED WITH BRICKBATS BY STRIKERS FIFTEEN INJURED STOP NO  
LATHI CHARGE OR PHYSICAL FORCE USED INFORMATION SENT ABSOLUTELY  
UNFOUNDED JAGATBABU SENT DEHRI YESTERDAY

ANUGRAHNARAYAN SINHA

102. *From Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar*

Mussoorie  
19th October 1938

DR RAJENDRAPRASAD  
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH  
KINGSWAY  
DELHI

FACTS MISREPRESENTED TO YOU SITUATION QUIET HAVE ANUGRAHBABU TO  
TALK YOU ON PHONE

PRIME MINISTER BIHAR

103. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

Camp: Bardoli  
October 19, 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

Some months ago I talked to you about a complaint I had received from one Mr. Prem Chand, a contractor of Muzaffarpur against Shri Krishna Babu regarding his son. It was a complaint about a contract which was first given to Mr. Prem Chand by the President, District Local Board, and subsequently cancelled and given to Prime Minister's son. He alleged that Babu Mahesh Prasad Sinha, Chairman of the District Board, Muzaffarpur is related to the Prime Minister of Bihar. I had forwarded the complaint to Shri Krishnababu for a personal report, as I thought such insinuations against a Prime Minister were undesirable. He simply wrote to me saying that my letter was forwarded to the Chairman, District Board, Muzaffarpur. I got no reply from either of them afterwards. This is another complaint received from Mr. Prem Chand of which I am sending you a copy. I have also heard while at Delhi several bad rumours about the Premier's son. This is not a desirable position at all for a Congress Cabinet. If all these insinuations are false, we must be able to denounce these people, but if there is any truth in them we must take immediate steps to stop such scandalous things by removing the causes of such complaints.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Harijan Colony  
Kingsway  
Delhi.

Enclosure not included.

## 104. To Vallabhbhai Patel (Bombay)

Harijan Sevak Sangh  
Kingsway  
Delhi  
20th October 1938

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I received your two letters about the position of Congress Parties in Provinces where the Congress is in minority in the legislatures. I wrote to you what I felt and we shall of course discuss the matter when we meet.

I received a telegram from the Nawab of Chhatarpi two days ago informing me that the Zamindars of Agra Province have agreed to arbitration of the agrarian problem by us and the Oudh Talukdars were going to meet on the 27th. I have simply acknowledged the telegram and said that I was awaiting developments and expected that he was keeping you and Maulana Azad informed. I read in the *Hindustan Times* this morning that you and Maulana have also been informed by the Nawab and that the Parliamentary Sub-Committee is expected at Lucknow on or about the 27th. The Assembly which has been sitting has been adjourned till the 10th November to enable parties to have negotiation for a compromise. If the Oudh Talukdars also fall in line with the Agra Zamindars as appears likely in spite of some differences amongst them, you will have to go into the matter in detail. The Parliamentary Party of the U.P. is also going to meet to consider this question and perhaps they will appoint a Sub-Committee to present their point of view to the Parliamentary Sub-Committee. In the meantime the Kisan [Sabha] under the presidentship of Acharya Narendra Deva has passed a resolution to the effect that the pending Bill does not go far enough and does not give effect to the Faizpur Resolution. The Resolution consists that it should be so modified as to carry out the Faizpur Resolution. In the midst of all of this I do not know if any compromise will be possible. The Zamindars are coming with some hope. The Congress people do not want any further amendment in the Bill in favour of the landlords. The special correspondent of *The Statesman* says that the Zamindars had been influenced by the fact that the Parliamentary Sub-Committee takes a fair view as it did when it brought about a compromise in Bihar. The difficulty is that all these friends who have been thinking of the Bihar compromise either as a thing to be welcomed as the Zamindars do or a thing to be dreaded as many Kisan Sabhaites profess. They do not know what the compromise is and what concessions they have been able to secure in favour of the tenants with the consent and agreement of the landlords in Bihar. The U.P. Bill is far short of the Bihar Act in many important matters which are of a fundamental nature. If the Zamindars of U.P. know what Bihar Zamindars have conceded they would never talk of Bihar compromise. Similarly if the Bihar Kisan Sabhaites know what the U.P. Bill is which the U.P. Kisan Sabhaites are agreeable to they would not speak of the Bihar compromise as they do now. In

these circumstances I do not know what we shall be able to do in Lucknow. My position will particularly be awkward if I suggested anything for the U.P. tenants which was less than what I have secured for the Bihar tenants. I would therefore very much like to be left out of the discussions. But please do not understand it in any other light. I am always at your service and will act as you wish me.

I am leaving this place on the 23rd evening and will be going to Lucknow for a day where my niece is married. She has a son about ten years old who has been suffering from typhoid for about fifty days. From there I propose to go to Patna where I expect to be on the 25th or the 26th. We have a meeting of the Education Committee of our Province of which Professor Shah is the Chairman from the 27th. It is most likely that the meeting may be postponed as Dr. Zakir Husain who is one of the members of the Committee has had an eye operation and is at present in Bombay on that account. I have asked Professor Shah to fix a meeting in consultation with him. If you require my presence at Lucknow you will please fix a date which may not clash with the meeting of the Education Sub-Committee. You can easily ascertain the date of the meeting from Professor Shah. I am requesting him also to inform you of the meeting of the Education Committee and the time it is likely to take. I may also mention that I have another engagement at Patna on the 31st October and 1st November in connection with a Trust of which I am a member. There is also a meeting of the Working Committee of the Bihar Province Committee on the 3rd and 4th November which I am going to attend after a long time. I am mentioning all these so that you may know my programme. If I am free after the 4th I propose to go to my village.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

105. *From Biswanath Das, Prime Minister, Orissa*

Camp: Berhampur  
Cuttack  
20 October 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Your favour of 14th October to hand. I will enquire all about the matter of Sri Banamali Behura. Speaking from memory I have to inform you that I offered him what he and his son first wanted. Subsequently they wanted something more and this will be duly considered. Your letter lends additional weight to their proposals.

I learn from Gopabandhu Babu that you are coming to Cuttack. I had also requested Sardarji to have the enquiry soon. Please let us know about 15 days ahead when you could come to Cuttack so that we will arrange our programme

accordingly. If there are any programmes we will cancel them. Added to this we will have the necessary papers collected to show you how mischievous and unfounded are the allegations and how some of these Congressmen are themselves responsible for this propaganda. Hope your health is alright.

With pranams.

Yours sincerely,  
B.N. Das

Sri Rajendra Prasad  
Harijan Colony  
Kingsway, Delhi.

106. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

October 21, 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

I have received your letter of the 16th October. I am not at all in touch with Sind. I do not know the developments, but I am receiving piteous telegrams and letters almost every day, sample of which, received yesterday, is quoted below:

SHIKARPUR PANCHAYAT HUMBLY REQUEST CONGRESS HIGH COMMAND TO SPARE TIME RECONSIDER THEIR DECISION REGARDING SIND MINISTRY AND ATTITUDE OF LOCAL CONGRESS GROUP TOWARDS IT IN VIEW OF REACTIONARY ATTITUDE OF RECENTLY HELD MUSLIM LEAGUE CONFERENCE ANTINATIONAL HIGHLY COMMUNAL HOSTILE RESOLUTION ADOPTED AND INSTALL MUSLIM LEAGUE MINISTRY WHICH IS BOUND TO BE COMMUNAL AFFAIR THEREFORE DANGEROUS TO MINORITY COMMUNITY INTERESTS PANCHAYAT DESIRES TO EXPRESS DEEP SENSE OF INDIGNATION ALARM AND BEG TO REQUEST HUMBLE YET EMPHATIC REQUEST THAT CONGRESS AUTHORITIES BE PLEASED INSTRUCT LOCAL CONGRESS MLAS GROUP TO NOT ONLY ABSTAIN FROM OFFERING ANY OPPOSITION TO PRESENT MINISTRY BUT TO ACTIVELY SUPPORT IT FOR THEY SINCERELY BELIEVE THAT TO BE STEP IN BEST INTEREST OF SIND PEOPLE IN GENERAL AND MINORITY COMMUNITY IN PARTICULAR

SECRETARY SHIKARPUR PANCHAYAT

Dr. Choithram expected that I would favourably consider the case of Sind after the telegram that he had sent to me and you as also to Maulana. I have taken an indifferent attitude because I did not think that Maulana can be moved an inch from his position. He has already issued a public statement. I do not know with whom he is in touch, but he has not written to me anything about Sind.

I enclose herewith a copy of Nawab Chhatari's letter dated 18th October. I am writing to him that he may arrange for the conference in consultation with the

Premier, if he is satisfied that all the Talukdars will accept our decision and it would be advisable to meet, he can fix the date and place.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Rajendra Babu  
Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat  
Patna.

*Enclosure:*

(Copy of Nawab of Chhatari's letter to Vallabhbhai Patel)

22 Outram Road  
Lucknow  
October 18, 1938

My dear Sardar Saheb,

I have already telegraphed to you that the Zamindars of the Agra Province are willing to accept your proposal regarding the Tenancy Bill. The Talukdars of Oudh are meeting on the 27th Oct. to consider the matter. We shall then know what their decision will be. In your letter of September 28th it was suggested that the Parliamentary Sub-Committee will consider the following three points: (1) Sir, (2) Ejectment, and (3) Planting of trees. These are only some of the salient points that were discussed by our deputation at Delhi. Besides these, as you will remember, other points regarding the Tenancy Bill were also raised. In our view they are of equal importance and we propose to place them for your consideration at our next meeting.

We shall be very grateful if Mr. Bhulabhai Desai is also asked to assist in the proceedings.

We also suggest for your serious consideration that the meeting should be held in Delhi so that the whole matter might be considered in calm and detached surroundings.

We have already informed the Hon'ble the Premier of the result of our deliberations and the position in regard to the Talukdars. We suggest that the negotiations may take place in the first week of November.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,  
(Sd.)



107. *From Subhas Chandra Bose*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Swaraj Bhawan  
Allahabad  
24th October 1938

My dear Rajen Babu,

I was happy to receive your letter of the 16th inst. from Delhi and to know that you had been feeling better.

The Bombay Government have not finally decided about the Secretary to the Planning Committee. As soon as the Secretary is appointed, I shall see if Mr. Gokhale could be included in staff which the Secretary will necessarily require.

I have issued a circular letter to the Presidents of the Provincial Congress Committees requesting them to have a report prepared of the extra-parliamentary work done during the period ending on the 31st October. If the reports prove to be interesting, I intend asking our office to publish a booklet which will be in the nature of a report of our half-yearly progress. I hope you will approve of this idea.

When I was at Bombay Sardar Patel showed me your letter to him about the work of the Congress Party in the minority Provinces. He has also sent me a copy of his reply to that letter. I agree with what he has said. I should only emphasise the fact that the Muslim League is violently angry with the Congress, not so much because of the activities of Congressmen in the minority Provinces but because of the activities of Congressmen and Congress Ministries in the majority Provinces.

I have been feeling worried over the situation in Sind. I am inclined to agree with our Party in that Province and to hold that we should lend our support to the Allahbaksh Ministry. On this point Sardar and I are in perfect agreement.

Hope your health is much better now.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Subhas C. Bose

108. *To Subhas Chandra Bose, President, Indian National Congress (Calcutta)*

Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat, Patna  
26th October 1938

My dear Subhas Babu,

Many thanks for your letter. I have noted what you say about the office of the Planning Committee.

I had written to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel what I felt about our attitude and activities in Provinces where Congress is not in a majority. We shall discuss it, if necessary, when we meet.

I am surprised to read in the *Hindusthan Standard* of today a summary of my report on the Bihari-Bengali controversy. The Working Committee had decided that it should be circulated among members and considered at its next meeting. In the meantime it was to be treated as confidential. It is therefore very surprising that it should find its way to a newspaper. The paper purports to have got it from Allahabad. I have requested the Secretary to make an inquiry into the matter. I had got only three copies made. One was officially handed over to Kripalaniji, a second copy was given to you as desired at Delhi, and the third copy has been with me. This is the third time within a few months that documents we did not like to be published have got unauthorised publication. I request you also to make inquiries. Not that I mind its publication in the least. My concern is only about papers of our office being obtained by newspapers and published without authority.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

109. To J.B. Kripalani (Allahabad)

Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat  
Patna  
26th October 1938

My dear Kripalaniji,

I am surprised to find that the *Hindusthan Standard* of Calcutta has published a summary of my report on the Bengali-Bihari question. It purports to have received it from its Allahabad correspondent. The decision of the Working Committee was that the report should be circulated among members of the Working Committee and considered at its next meeting. In the meantime it was to be treated as confidential. I had only three copies made—one was given to the General Secretary, another was supplied to the President on his desire, and the third copy was kept by me. It is really surprising that it should have found its way to a correspondent of the *Hindusthan Standard*. The *Advance* of Calcutta telephoned to me this morning informing me that it had been published. I told him that it was unauthorised. I shall be obliged if you kindly make inquiries to find out how it got into the Press.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

110. *From Subhas Chandra Bose*

## ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Swaraj Bhawan

Allahabad

Train, 27 October 1938

My dear Rajen Babu,

I am now on my way to Shillong. I should have gone earlier, but friends there had been pressing me to give a fortnight for touring in November. This I could not agree to. I decided ultimately to go now because of some urgent matters. Firstly, the Premier, Bardoloi, has received an offer from some tribal M.L.A.s who want to join the Congress provided their chief is given a seat in the Cabinet. Secondly, the communal situation in Sylhet is giving cause for anxiety. There were riots recently, and now, in connection with the Kali Puja immersion ceremony, the vexed question of music before mosques has assumed importance.

I requested Maulana Sahib several times to come to Shillong with me but he declined, saying that it was not necessary. So I am going alone.

The Premier thinks that if the offer of the tribal M.L.A.s is accepted by him, then the position of the Ministry will be unshakable in future.

I am worried over the situation in Sind because I feel that our present policy there is not a correct one. I think that the Allahbaksh Ministry should be supported by us, at least for this reason that an alternative ministry formed by the Muslim League would be a worse one for the Congress and for the public. Maulana Sahib is, of course, adamant on this point and that makes one feel helpless.

I hope you are keeping well now. Please do not overstrain yourself.

With kindest regards,

Yours affectionately,

Subhas C. Bose

Babu Rajendra Prasad

Patna.

111. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

## ALL INDIA CONGRESS PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE

Purushottam Mansion

Opp. Opera House

Bombay

27th October 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I got your letter of the 24th yesterday, together with the cuttings from the *Pioneer*. I had received similar cuttings from Nawab of Chhatari. I do not think

the Oudh Zamindars are going to agree to our arbitration and I take it that the matter is dropped. I had phoned Pantji last night and he also thinks that my view is correct. But the Zamindars are meeting today and he has promised me to communicate their decision by wire.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Patna.

112. *From J.B. Kripalani*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Swaraj Bhawan  
Allahabad  
October 29, 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Before I got your letter of the 26th instant I had a telegram from the President. I am sorry that your report should have been published. I have made sifting inquiry into the matter. I find that the report has not leaked out from our office. I am told that the Press agencies here had been written to by Calcutta papers to get copies and they approached the office but the office refused to supply them with any copy and told them that the report was confidential. You will find from this that the local reporters had no knowledge that there was a report. Their knowledge was derived from instructions from Calcutta.

I have inquired about the correspondent of the *Hindusthan Standard*. I find that the person does not serve only on the *Hindusthan Standard* but also the other papers like the *Bombay Chronicle*, and *Sentinel*. I am firmly of view that the report has been got from Calcutta itself. The office sent out copies only to the members of the Working Committee. They sent no copies to you, Jawaharlal or myself.

They had typed 18 copies, 12 of them were sent to the members of the Working Committee and six are in the office. Of these six, 5 copies were such as have been rejected owing to bad type. The original and one copy were kept as office copies. This is not the first time that Calcutta papers have published the headline "Allahabad", while they had got their information from other sources. This puts the office in a very awkward position. We here are very strict with Press reporters and this is the constant complaint of the reporters.

Now that this has been published, what do you advise me to do? Should I issue a statement declaring that it is unauthorised publication and not from our office?

I returned from Mussoorie yesterday via Delhi. I inquired about you at Delhi

but I learnt that you had left the previous day. How is your health at present?  
With pranams.

Yours sincerely,  
J.B. Kripalani

Shri Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat, Patna.

113. *From Abul Kalam Azad*

Calcutta  
29 October 1938

RAJENDRAPRASADJI  
PATNA

OWING INDISPOSITION JOURNEY POSTPONED PLEASE DECIDE BHAGALPORE  
GAYA AFFAIRS REMOVING MUSLIM COMPLAINTS WHICH HAVE PERTURBED  
MUSLIM NATIONALISTS IMMEDIATE REMEDY NECESSARY PLEASE TELEPHONE  
ME TONIGHT

ABUL KALAM AZAD

114. *From Maharajadhiraja Sir Kameshwar Singh*

The Palace  
Darbhanga  
30th October 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

After waiting for nearly a month on the receipt of your letter dated the 4th August 1938 from Wardha, I wrote to the Hon. the Prime Minister in connection with the promised statement. But I regret to say that neither the statement has appeared nor any reply has yet been vouchsafed to the letter, a copy of which I enclose for your perusal.

As apprehended by me the situation has considerably deteriorated. I am herewith sending you a copy of the resolutions passed at a meeting held the other day in one of my villages, at the instance of Kisan Sabha workers, which will indicate the nature of the propaganda that are being carried among the tenants. Unless the great organisation, which you represent, comes forward to advocate the establishment of good relationship between the landlords and the tenants and a lead to that effect is given by you by issuing the statement the compromise will lose more than half of its value.

I am therefore requesting you again to issue the promised statement without any further delay, specially when almost all the legislations based on the compromise have been amicably passed.

I would not have given you this trouble at a time when you need rest, had it not been for the fact that such a statement is urgently necessary to make the faith, which the landlords put on the Congress organisation, strong.

With best regards,

I remain,  
Yours sincerely,  
K. Singh

Enclosure not included.

115. To J.B. Kripalani, General Secretary, All India Congress Committee, Allahabad

Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat, Patna  
31st October 1938

My dear Kripalaniji,

I have just received your letter and thank you for it. As soon as the report was published in Calcutta papers a representative of the *Advance* of Calcutta telephoned to me to find out whether the report had been issued. I told him that it was an [un]authorised publication and also that my surmise was that it had leaked from Calcutta and not from Allahabad. I am told the *Advance* published a note that was an unauthorised publication. There is nothing in the report which has to be kept back from the public; in fact we have to publish it. My concern is that our documents should get into the Press against the wishes of the Working Committee. I am wondering whether in view of this unauthorised publication of a summary which does not bring out all that is contained in the report, and thus creates somewhat onesided and wrong impression, we should not publish the whole report. The only trouble is the decision of the Working Committee. You may consult the President and other members and if they have no objection the report may be published. I think that will give a fair indication of the report and of the various points of view and the way they have been dealt with. Unfortunately I have got no copy and shall be obliged if you send one copy. In case you decide to issue the report to the Press please take care to see that all papers get simultaneously and no paper gets an advantage over others. This should be particularly attended to so far as Bengal and Bihar papers are concerned because these Provinces are more intimately concerned than the others. In Patna we have only the *Searchlight* and the *Indian Nation* among the dailies.

When is Jawaharlalji reaching Allahabad? When are you likely to have the next meeting of the Working Committee and where? Some time ago it was reported in the Press that the next meeting will be at Delhi. I do not see what particular advantage there is in having the meeting at Delhi. I suppose in view of Bapu's programme and the necessity of his presence in the meeting Wardha will be the best place. I should like to have early information in this connection.

After leaving Delhi I [had] again a relapse and just at present I am having some trouble. I hope it will pass off soon.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

116. *From J.B. Kripalani*

#### ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Swaraj Bhawan  
Allahabad  
2nd November 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Thanks for your letter of 31st October. After I wrote to you I have received more positive proofs that the Report that has appeared in the Calcutta papers was not sent from Allahabad, but was secured locally. This is what Mr. Sengupta of the United Press wrote to his representative here: "Please try to secure advance copies of Babu Rajendra Prasad's Report of Bengali-Behari question and send it on to Calcutta for our different centres. If the time for release is very short then wire release on the day on which we are permitted to give it to the press for publication." This shows that even the United Press, though it did not give publicity, was in possession of a copy.

I agree with you that we must get at the source of such leakage. But I am afraid if we get at the source of the trouble we may be painfully surprised.

Yes, now that the summary of the Report has been published the whole of it may be officially given to the Press. I am writing about it to the President and to some other members. If no objection is raised I shall try and see that all the papers get the Report simultaneously.

I have already written to the President to let me know the probable dates of the next meeting of the Working Committee. What has appeared in the Press in this connection, I think, is mere speculation. Bapu will not like to stay at Delhi for any length of time after he returns from the Frontier. Jawaharlalji wrote to me that after his arrival on the 17th at Bombay he will remain there for a couple of days and then go to Wardha if Bapu is at that time there. This he must have written to Bapu also. So I feel that Bapu will go direct to Wardha if he is not

detained for a short while at Delhi to meet the Viceroy.

I am sorry to learn that there has been relapse in your health after you left Delhi. I hope it has passed off now and you are doing well.

With pranams,

Yours sincerely,  
J.B. Kripalani

Mr. Sengupta's letter to his agent here has been given to me in confidence.

J.B.K.

117. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE

Bombay  
2nd November 1938

My dear Rajen Babu,

I got your letters of the 20th October and the 24th October. You must have received my reply. I am distressed to find that you are not keeping fit. I got a letter from Mr. Chakradhar this morning wherein he says that you will have to go to hospital for treatment.

I am not surprised about the unauthorised publication of your report regarding the Bengali-Bihari controversy. I agree it is better to publish the whole report in order to avoid misunderstanding. It is difficult to find out what we can do to stop such unauthorised publications when the leakage can be traced to highest amongst us.

I am enclosing herewith extracts from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's letter of the 28th October received by me here today as they will interest you and show you what he is capable of. I never dreamt that he will stoop to such dirty and mean tactics for re-election of an office which is sacred and is held in highest esteem by all people of the land.

We have decided not to go to Lucknow to consider about the Tenancy Bill as the Zamindars are not agreed amongst themselves.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram  
Patna.



*Enclosure:*

(Extracts from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's letter)

The effects of the canvassing of the President are also felt here. Several persons have complained of this to me during the last four days. Prafulla Babu had also come but what can I do in this matter? The most interesting statement is that of Prof. Humayun Kabir and his companions. This appeared in the papers in the morning, and they came to me in the evening. They said that they were very very sorry on learning that I have absolutely refused to accept the Presidentship for the next year, and owing to my refusal it was feared that Sardar Patel would become the President; therefore, they were forced to accept the proposal of Subhas Babu's party that he should be elected again.

When I told them that their information was quite unfounded, that no question of Presidentship has yet come before us till now, neither have I said anything about its acceptance or refusal, they were very much surprised. They told me that they were informed of the above fact in Delhi, with the fullest confidence in its truth. It was told to them that the question of the next President had come up before the Working Committee, and they thought of me about it, but I refused. They said that on account of my refusal it was feared that the name of Sardar Patel will be proposed. But as you were considered to be an anti-socialist and anti-extremist, and that you do not hold strong views against the Federation, moreover you were considered to be against Hindu-Muslim unity; it was necessary to propose the name of Subhas Babu to save the Congress of all these dangers. Congressmen, but they ran about for the Ministry and the Government jobs (sic). They will do whatever is required of them easily. They are ready to contradict their statement even now, but I stopped them from making themselves a laughing stock by such actions.

118. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE

Bombay  
3rd November 1938

My dear Rajen Babu,

I am enclosing herewith copy of a letter from a friend along with extracts from his letter to Sir Sultan Ahmed and his reply thereto. If it is possible I should like you to approach Sir Sultan with a request to explain to you the reasons which have led him to be so bitter against the Congress Ministries and to give specific

instances within his knowledge and real complaints against them if he can do so.  
You can do so as soon as you are out of the hospital.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram, Patna.

*Enclosure 1:*

(Copy of ...'s letter dated Bombay, the 28th October 1938, to  
Vallabhbhai Patel)

Bombay  
28 October 1938

My dear Sardar Saheb,

I venture to send you extracts from a letter, which I wrote to Sir Sultan Ahmed, and his reply thereto. Sir Sultan is a very patriotic Musalman and is also much trusted by Rajen Babu. Within two weeks of assuming power, the Bihar Government asked for his resignation as Advocate General, while an English Advocate General continued in Bombay. But that is an old story and did not change his opinion. I do not know what has recently happened, but I thought it my duty to send you this information privately.

Mr. Mangaldas, Solicitor, told me that in connection with an English daily in Bombay you were on the look out for an Editor. I do not know whether it will be a useful information, but I may say that Mr. B.P. Wadia was Editor of the *New India* of Madras in its best days for five years and, to the best of my knowledge, he is a very staunch nationalist. (He is the husband of Madame Sophia Wadia.)

Yours sincerely,

*Enclosure 2:*

(Extracts from Shri ...'s letter dated Patna, the 19th October 1938, to  
Sir Sultan Ahmed)

"I think it is very high time that somebody intervened between the Congress and the League. Without any desire to apportion blame, it is possible for one to deplore the trend of development. I understand that the Moslem members are throwing in their whole weight in the Income Tax Select Committee with Government even on clauses which discriminate between Indians and Europeans, to the serious (sic) advantage of the latter. This is only the beginning, but this sort of thing in the open House will involve the Moslems into a position a lot more serious than at the time of the Recruiting Bill. If the Moslems have decided to sell this country to the Europeans in all respects, why don't they say so? This is the kind of the question which will be asked."

*Enclosure 3:*

(Extracts from Sir Sultan Ahmed's letter dated 26 October 1938 to ...)

"I entirely agree that the bitterness of feeling between the Congress and the League is increasing daily with the only possible result that independence of the country for which both of them stand, is going further and further away from us. You know my views. I believe that the freedom of the country cannot be had by any Act of Parliament or by any foolish notion such as the one that some people entertained that with the war in Europe, India will get freedom. The freedom of the country depends entirely upon our own settlement and once we settle our differences no power in the world can prevent us from getting all that we want. So far, I had blamed the Musalmans for their hot-headedness, impracticable suggestions and unreasonable demands, but after having seen the working of the Congress Ministries in at least two or three Provinces I am veering round to the view that the apprehension of the Muslims is justified. The meanness to which some of the Congress people can stoop when power has been given to them has been an eye-opener to me. Their tall talk of nationalism is a perfect humbug and I find that in the chair of authority they are guilty of bias, bigotry, inequities and meanness which are absolutely astounding. For a man with my mentality and sincerity and anxiety for the good of India which I hope you know better than many people, the use of such strong expressions as I have done may be surprising, but I am afraid I am being forced to come to these conclusions. I am still however reluctant to join actively any Party which may make my intervention between the Congress and the League later impossible. I would like now, if possible within a few weeks, to intervene and see if I can be of any service. I have had long talks with His Highness the Agha Khan on the subject and I am anxiously awaiting his arrival early next month."

119. *From Gopi Chand Bhargava*

Lajpatrai Bhavan

Lahore

5 November 1938

My dear Babuji,

Syt. Deshbandhuji Gupta informs that he tried to explain two of the Agrarian Bills that were passed by the Punjab Assembly last time—Restitution of Mortgaged Lands Bill and Land Alienation Second Amendment Bill. You held out a hope that you would issue a statement before 10th instant. I know that you are undergoing an operation on nose but as [the] matter is urgent I am requesting you to issue the note. Please excuse trouble.

Yours sincerely,  
Gopi Chand Bhargava

Babu Rajendra Prasadji  
Patna.

120. *From Sarat Chandra Bose*

Woodburn Park  
Calcutta  
9th November 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I am writing this letter to recommend for your *very special consideration* the case of Dr. Syed Ajaz Husain Jafri, Ph.D.

He was the Mutwali (Manager) of the Hooghly Imambara, and has suddenly been removed from his post on a flimsy and unjust pretext. The real reason for the treatment he has received at the hands of the Committee of Management is his political convictions. The Committee of Management is composed of men belonging predominantly to the Moslem League, while Dr. Jafri is a strict and staunch Congressite. I know many inducements were held out to Dr. Jafri to make him give up his relations with the Congress. This he totally refused to do and has, as a result, lost his job. It is up to us now to do something for him. Though he himself was somewhat reticent about this matter, I have learnt that he is in very sore straits with his large family. Kindly let me know if it will be possible for you to do something for him at a very early date. Dr. Jafri comes from Muzaffarpur and is a thoroughly dependable person.

On receipt of your reply I shall ask Dr. Jafri to see or write to you. Kindly treat this as very urgent.

Yours sincerely,  
Sarat Chandra Bose

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Patna.

121. *To Maharajadhiraja Sir Kameshwar Singh (Darbhanga)*

Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat, Patna  
10th November 1938

My dear Maharajadhiraja Bahadur,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the 30th October 1938 and enclosures.

I did not reply earlier as I wanted to have a talk with Shri Satyanarayan Sinha regarding the incident in the Darbhanga district mentioned in the letter. He assured me that he has recently toured in the district and has explained in all his speeches the recent tenancy legislation and emphasised the necessity of tenants paying their rent in time. He also assures me that on the whole his tour has proved

very successful. With cooperation of Raj officials in removing just and reasonable grievances wherever they may exist, it will not be difficult, he thinks, to establish good relations and ensure peaceful conditions. He has explained the position to the Manager, and, if I mistake not, he met you also.

As regards the issue of the statement I agree that it should be issued. I spoke to the Prime Minister yesterday about it. He pointed out one or two things to which I think it is necessary to draw your attention. There has been a movement among Zamindars in Beguserai subdivision and in some other places to rush rent suits to avoid the effect of the recent legislation. He is also concerned about the flood-stricken areas where tenants are much in distress and may not have the capacity to pay. Our difficulty with the kisans in the present atmosphere is that although the law has been passed, any benefit derivable from it has not yet reached them, and advantage is being taken of it to create misunderstanding among them. He has been hesitating for this reason and would prefer to wait till the machinery is set in motion and the benefit of the measures begins to reach the tenants. I am hoping to meet him again after he returns in a day or two and to place before him a draft which I will forward after getting his approval.

I am still unwell but there is nothing to cause anxiety.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

122. *To Gopi Kishore Lal*

P.O. Ziradei (Saran)  
15th November 1938

My dear Gopi Babu,

I am anxious to have some information which only the Government and your Department in particular can give. I realise that the collection of the information may involve trouble and your Department may not have time to attend to this extra work. In that case if you be prepared to allow access to the sources from which the information can be gathered, I may arrange to have some advanced students of economics under one of their Professors to undertake the work. The Settlement Reports so far as I have seen them give the number of holdings and some of them strike an average and mention it as the average size of holdings in the district. I want the numbers of holdings of different sizes, e.g.:

Number of holdings of 1 acre and below

Number of holdings above 1 acre and below 2 acres

Number of holdings above 2 acres and below the average (which in many districts is round about 2.5 acres)

Number of holdings above the average and below, say, 4 acres  
Number of holdings above 4 acres and below 6 acres  
Number of holdings above 6 acres and below 8 acres  
Number of holdings above 8 acres and below 10 acres  
Number of holdings above 10 acres and below 15 acres  
Number of holdings above 15 acres and below 20 acres  
Number of holdings above 20 acres and below 30 acres  
Number of holdings above 30 acres and below 40 acres  
Number of holdings above 40 acres and below 50 acres  
Number of holdings above 50 acres.

I suppose it will be possible to get this information from the materials on which the Settlement Reports are based. It would also be desirable, when the information is being collected, to collect figures of total rent payable for the various categories of holdings mentioned above as also the total area under each category.

I am not writing to the Prime Minister as this information will have to be collected from your Department, and unless you consider it practicable, it will not go ahead at all. I should like to have the figures for typical districts—say, one in each division. But if that is considered too extensive an inquiry I shall be content with, say, one subdivision in each division or in a smaller area. We shall be able to gauge the amount of work involved also. If we started on a small scale and then, if so advised, it may be extended.

You may consult the authorities, if you consider it necessary. I shall be expecting a reply here.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

123. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

Wardha  
November 16/17, 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

The Hon'ble K.B. Allahbaksh arrived here this morning. He expected you would be here according to our original programme. I am enclosing herewith copy of a letter which he delivered to me this morning on his arrival together with my reply to it. I have carefully gone through the relevant portion of our decision by which we suggested the postponement of the operation of the entire revenue proposals including grouping for one year. I am sure that you have got the original decision, but for your ready reference I am enclosing a copy of the relevant extract of our decision. The Sind Assembly Congress Party has pressed

this viewpoint on the Ministry in accordance with our advice and the Ministry desire to know whether the Sind Party's resolution is in conformity with our decision in order that they can place it before the Sind Governor when he returns and advise him to accept it. They wanted our confirmation in order that there may be no difficulty or misunderstanding afterwards.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Ziradei (Distt. Saran).

*Enclosure 1:*

(Copy of letter dated 16 November 1938 from Allahbaksh to Vallabhbhai Patel)

My dear Sardar Vallabhbhai,

I am reproducing the draft discussed and accepted by the Sind Congress Party at its meeting held on 22.10.38 and shall be thankful if you would kindly let me know if this would meet the requirements of Wardha decision of September 9, 1938.

Ministry to be pressed to accept Wardha decision, viz., postponement of the whole order regarding assessment including groupings. The implication would be that the levy of assessment on account of increased rate over the present rates of assessment including groupings to be postponed for one year. The Government shall pass final orders on the assessment proposals after taking into consideration the objections invited and after hearing the Assembly. The Government shall pass such orders as they think fit after the above procedure and may modify their proposals as they deem proper and these modified orders shall come into force from 1939-1940. Ministers shall discuss the assessment proposals before passing final orders with the Leader of the Congress Party. There will be no non-confidence motion on the Government orders, as they are finally passed, from the Congress Party nor shall the party join in such a motion.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Allahbaksh

*Enclosure 2:*

(Copy of letter from Vallabhbhai Patel to Allahbaksh)

Wardha  
16/17 November 1938

My dear Allahbaksh,

I have received your letter of 16.11.1938, Wardha, in which you have quoted the resolution of the Congress Party in the Sind Assembly of 28.10.38 in

connection with the Wardha decision of the All India Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee, dated 9 September 1938 and asked me whether that resolution meets with requirements of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee's decision. As our decision was that the Congress Party should withdraw its support to your Ministry unless the operation of the entire revenue proposals including the grouping were postponed for one year and as the resolution of the Sind Assembly Congress Party quoted by you confirms the position taken up in the Parliamentary Sub-Committee's decision, we shall be bound to endorse the said resolution of the Sind Assembly Congress Party if your Government accepts that position.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Hon'ble K.B. Allahbakhsh  
Premier, Sind Government  
Camp: Wardha.

*Enclosure 3:*

(Extracts from the All India Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee's decision)

The question has been reviewed by the Parliamentary Sub-Committee in consultation with the President of the Congress at Wardha in all aspects.

The Parliamentary Sub-Committee has come to the conclusion that unless the Ministry agrees to postpone the operation of the orders in their entirety for one year, which they had promised to do before the orders were issued, to enable the Province and the Assembly to consider and discuss the question in all its aspects, it must advise the Congress Party in the Assembly to withdraw its support from the Ministry, which it had conditionally promised, and revert to its freedom of action.

It considers the attitude and action of the Ministry in this respect highly objectionable, but the Congress Party, composed as it is in the Sind Assembly of only ten members in a House of sixty, should not take upon itself the responsibility in an important matter like this of turning the scale in favour of one party or another.

The Parliamentary Sub-Committee, accordingly, advises the Congress Party to remain neutral in the next session of the Assembly when a vote of no-confidence is brought against the Ministry. If, however, the Ministry accepts the suggestion and postpones operation of the orders for one year, conditional support promised by it will continue to be given. In that event the Congress Party will help in every way in securing a discussion of the proposals in all their aspects within the twelve months, so that whatever proposals may emerge will be after a full and frank discussion of the question on its merits.



124. *From Sarat Chandra Bose*

Woodburn Park  
Calcutta  
17th November 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Many thanks for your letter of the 10th instant. Please try to do all you can for Dr. Jafri. He is in great distress and has written me a letter about his condition which I was very much pained to read. He saw Sri Babu recently in connexion with his application for the post of Asstt. Manager of the Bettiah Estate. The matter, I am informed, has not yet been decided. Will you kindly use your influence to give this post to Dr. Jafri?

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Sarat Chandra Bose

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat, Patna.

125. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

November 19, 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I have just got your letter of the 17th November. I am sorry to hear that you are again down with temperature. Newspaper reports show that your doctors are coming from Patna to see [you] and that makes me more anxious. I returned this morning from Wardha. Jawaharlal met me this morning.

I do not know anything about Sarkar's coming here to see me. All this is due to the over-anxiety of our Bengal leaders to break the present ministry and form a coalition ministry. Recently they were trying very hard. I remember about ten days ago I had a phone from Subhas asking me to phone to Sarkar to persuade him to resign. I did not do so and told him that I cannot talk of such things on the telephone, but when I was [at] Wardha Subhas phoned me again saying that he was optimistic this time. Soon after that there was some news in the Press that the present ministry has been strengthened by the return of a large number of those who had left the ministerial party and two of them have been taken in the Ministry. *Hindusthan Standard* gets all the information from Subhas's place. Some part of the conversation which must have taken place at his house appears to have leaked out in the Press. Nobody is anxious to join the Federation, but you

cannot prevent him from using any argument to suit his own purpose. He is making a mess of Congress politics. But what can we do?

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Ziradei (Distt. Saran).

126. *From Dr. Syed Mahmud*

Patna  
20 November 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Babu Sukhlal Singh and Moulvi Abdur Razaque came to you. Mr. Abdul Jalil of Darbhanga assures me that Hazaribagh seat is certain. B. Sukhlal Singh and M. Mohamed Salah are of the same opinion. B. Sukhlal Singh says that B. Krishna Ballabh Sahay has made a tour with M. Abdur Razaque and he is also of the same opinion. Mr. Jalil has managed the situation well there. Now the question is of money. I am also informed by Babu Anugrah Narayan Sinha that the W.C. had decided not to spend any money. Will it at all be possible for the Congress Committee to spend any money over this election?

If it can, it is worth spending. Please find out the situation from Mr. Sukhlal Singh and decide immediately.

Hoping you are well.

With kind regards,

Yours affectionately,  
Syed Mahmud

127. *To Vallabhbhai Patel (Bombay)*

Bihar  
21st November 1938

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I sent you a cutting from the *Hindusthan Standard* the other day. The paper has now returned to the charge in its editorial. I am enclosing a cutting. It seems there is a concerted move to bolster up his claim to the Presidentship by discrediting others as being favourable to Federation or acceptance of coalition Ministries in the non-Congress Provinces. The fact however is that no one outside

Bengal is at all keen on having a coalition Ministry in Bengal and so far as I know most of us are in fact opposed to it fundamentally on principle as it is not possible with the Assembly composed as it is at present to have a majority of Congressmen even in a coalition Party, not to speak of the Assembly as a whole. With a minority in the Assembly Party and in the Cabinet the Congress in coalition will be in a very awkward position and will be able to do absolutely nothing while earning all the blame for the actions and omissions of the coalition Ministry. I think [at] some stage or the other we shall have to make this quite clear. It is also necessary in my opinion to publicly announce when the occasion arises that in this matter the Parliamentary Sub-Committee will prefer not to have a coalition in these circumstances but that it will not stand in the way of the Congress Party and the Provincial Congress Committee in Bengal if they think that they can discharge their responsibility by joining a coalition. The responsibility should be fastened where it belongs and this kind of unscrupulous propaganda should not be permitted. This will of course have to be done not in a hurry but when the opportunity arises.

Even as regards Assam I think we have to make it clear that the responsibility of forming the Ministry there rests entirely with the President. Two of the members of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee were opposed to it and so far as you were concerned you too gave way because of the peculiar circumstances in which you found yourself as you explained to the Working Committee. It is not fair to charge people with conspiracy to accept Federation and as a move in that direction to help for formation of coalition Ministries in Assam and in Bengal.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Enclosure not included.

128. *To Vallabhbhai Patel*

P.O. Zirādei (Saran)  
21st November 1938

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I am herewith enclosing copy of a letter which I have received from Sir Sultan Ahmed in reply to mine as also my letter to him. As you will see he has not given any specific grievances as I had asked for but has referred to four kinds of opposition which the Ministry is meeting, viz., from Musalmans, Bengalis, Kisans and Zamindars and Services. We are aware of these but I could not imagine that Sir Sultan had these in mind when he wrote that letter. When I go to Patna I shall meet him and I will write to you what transpires between him and me.

I will give you one instance of the wild propaganda that is carried on by some Muslims of the League. A few miles from this village a dead body of a Musalman was discovered somewhere. The police, suspecting foul play, started investigation. There had been some sort of a tension between the Hindus and the Musalmans of that village some time ago and the Musalmans came forward with the claim that the body was of a particular person who had some quarrel with the Hindus on account of an incident with a Hindu girl. The case of the Hindus regarding that incident was that this boy had molested the girl while the case of the Muslim boy was that she had stolen some maize from his field which had resulted in the altercation. It was said that on account of this enmity the Hindus had murdered the boy and thrown away the dead body. A number of Musalmans came forward to give evidence that they had actually seen something being carried by a number of Hindus tied in a cloth which was probably the dead body. A number of other circumstantial details were supplied. The police were not satisfied that the story was true and they were continuing their investigation when propaganda was started in the Press, particularly by the *Star of India*, that the police were trying to shield the Hindus and to suppress the whole incident. This was done on account of the fact that the Deputy Superintendent of Police and the Sub-Inspector of Police happened to be Hindus although the Inspector who ranks in between the two was a Musalman. Much noise was created and thus pressure put on the police to send up a number of Hindus for trial on a charge of murder. The police however did not submit their charge sheet and carried on their investigation which resulted in the discovery of the supposed dead man who was in service with somebody at Calcutta. The man has now been brought and it is now admitted by all concerned that it was this person to whose death they had deposed with details. This is the main story. I do not know if any action will be taken against the false witnesses. They are now trying to find out who was actually murdered and who the murderers were. I am trying to ascertain all the facts and the comments in the papers and will let you know when I am in possession of more detailed information. This is the kind of propaganda which the Ministry has to face.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel  
Bombay.

*Enclosure 1:*

(Copy of letter dated Patna, the 16th November 1938, from Sir Sultan Ahmed to Rajendra Prasad)

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 7th instant which I received only day before yesterday on my return from Bombay. I tried to get into touch with you

here but I was told that you were again indisposed and had to leave for your home.

Believe me I had nothing but the love of my country which compelled me to write to my friend in the strain in which I did and though I did not think that he will send a copy of my letter to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, I am glad that he did so, as the latter has sent on the same to you. I claim that when the Congress decided to accept office last year, no one outside the Congress circle was more pleased than myself. I felt that we Indians had got power to do good to the people of the Provinces and those who were assuming office had tremendous responsibilities to discharge and needed our best support in spite of our difference of opinion. I felt that their action should not be criticised with hostility and that the criticism should always be constructive and not destructive. I wrote a letter to the Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga in that light and begged of him to do all that he could to help the Ministry and make it a success. For a long time and even now I feel that those who are opposed to the Congress indulge in exaggerations and tall talks and for a long time I attached no importance to the catalogue of grievances placed before me but within the last few months I was compelled to study the attitude of the Congress Ministry towards the Muslim community and other minorities and I have been led to most depressing conclusions.

The sentence that you have quoted in your letter from my letter is strong but believe me it pained me more than you can imagine when I used it. At times I wondered if I was swerving from the path of impartiality and getting into that groove of exaggeration in which some of my Muslim friends have been indulging but I am convinced that it is not so.

However, even now I shall be happy if I can be of the slightest service in bringing about an improvement in the conditions prevailing. Please let me know when you are likely to come to Patna and I should like to have a couple of hours with you quietly without anybody in the world to know anything about it and I shall give you the details upon which my conclusions are based.

I hope you are feeling better on your return to the village. I feel so sorry that of all persons in the world you should be suffering from ailments. If you had just a little better health what greater amount of good you would have been able to do. As it is I know the claims on your time are tremendous but I hope that if you and I discuss matters for a short time, the time so spent will not be wasted. In the meantime please put yourself only the following questions as I put to myself in order to decide whether a detailed enquiry is not clearly indicated. There is no doubt that the Muslims in general are up in arms against the Ministry, the Bengalis have no good words to speak about them, the kisans have nothing but abuses, the landlords are dissatisfied, and the services are not happy.

- (1) Can all these be due to unreasonableness on the part of the whole lot of them, or is it that things have been managed in none too satisfactory a way?
- (2) Is the Ministry above communalism by which I mean not only Hindu and Muslim troubles but also Bhumihar Brahman, Kayastha, Rajput, Bengali or Bihari?

- (3) Are services being filled on the basis of one's political convictions or irrespective of them?
- (4) Is the Ministry really living up to the life which the Mahatma or yourself intended them to live up to?

With affectionate regards,

Yours very sincerely,  
Sultan Ahmed

*Enclosure 2:*

(Copy of Rajendra Prasad's letter posted on 7 November 1938 to Sir Sultan Ahmed)

My dear Sir Sultan Ahmed,

Some days ago I received a letter from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel enclosing copy of extracts from correspondence which has passed between you and a friend whose name he has not mentioned. As the matter is of great national importance and one in which we are all interested I take the liberty of addressing you in the hope that it may be possible to do something to stem the tide of bitterness that has been overrunning the country and making communal relations most distressing to all lovers of the country. I am enclosing copy of the extract sent to me and request you to be good enough to let me have particulars about any specific incidents or action taken by the Congress Government in Bihar which have led you to the conclusion that Congressmen in office have been "guilty of bias, bigotry, irregularities, and meanness which are absolutely astounding". I am anxious to have the information so that I may look into the matter and take such steps as may be called for. I am naturally interested primarily in our own Province but any information relating to any other Province will be equally welcome. I need hardly assure you that our effort always has been to act fairly and justly, and if there is any reasonable ground for complaint, I shall do what I can to have it removed.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

129. *To Sir Sultan Ahmed*

P.O. Ziradei (Saran)  
21st November 1938

My dear Sir Sultan Ahmed,

I thank you for your letter of the 16th last<sup>1</sup> which I received here yesterday. I was myself painfully surprised when I read your first letter that you should have formed such a harsh judgment about the Congress Ministry in general. My desire in asking for specific instances was to get particular incidents or actions which

had created that impression in you so that I might pursue each incident for action and if I found after investigation that any action was called for to take such action to set things right. I shall of course take the opportunity of meeting you in Patna when I am there. I am afraid however that my health at the present moment does not permit the hope that I shall be able to do so within the next few days.

I am aware that there is much propaganda against the Congress Ministry particularly of Bihar by League circles, by Bengalis and by Kisan Sabhaites. It is really difficult to do anything when it is not known or pointed out what it is that is wanted. So far as I am aware the Congress Ministry has done nothing to the prejudice of Musalmans and if my impression is incorrect I should be obliged to be corrected so that any injustice which may have been done can be rectified. As regards the Bengalis I have had to go into the matter in detail and have made a report to the Working Committee of the Congress which will deal with it at its next meeting. As regards the kisans I do not know if the statement which I issued the other day regarding the tenancy legislation has been seen by you. I have explained therein what the legislation has done for the kisans. If you think there is anything further that should be done for the kisans I am quite sure the Ministry will give to your opinion in the matter their most earnest consideration. It is true that the benefit of the Legislation has as yet not reached the kisans, partly on account of the delay in legislation and partly on account of the proverbially slow-moving machinery of the Government. I am hoping that when they do get the benefit contemplated the kisans will realise what the Ministry has been trying to do for them. As regards the appointments made by the Ministry I do not think any community has any just grievance. It is natural that when communities which had been backward in education are coming up they are sure to claim share in appointments. I think the Ministry has been quite fair to such communities and the so-called advanced communities cannot continue to enjoy the monopoly they had enjoyed so long. I do not think this can be called communalism. This is precisely the question that has arisen regarding the Bengalis also. I am not in touch with the Services and so I am not in a position to say anything about their attitude. But I will ask the authorities to look into the matter and try to find out what their grievances are and to remove them as far as possible. I had not intended to write to you at length in view of the fact that we may meet at not a very distant date. What I have stated above is as I feel at present and if I am wrong I shall be obliged if you correct me and give me facts to enable me to form a different opinion.

Thanking you for your kind wishes and with regards,

I am,  
Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Sir Sultan Ahmed  
Patna.

<sup>1</sup>See Enclosure 1 to Rajendra Prasad's letter dated 21.11.1938 to Vallabhbhai Patel.

130. *From Ramkrishna Dalmia*

Dalmianagar  
(Bihar)

November 21, 1938

My dear Bhai Rajendra Prasadjee,

Though I am reluctant to disturb the rest you are enjoying, I find that I have to do so and write to you about a matter which I consider to be of grave importance to the country.

People have been persistently whispering about some shady transaction (in connection with District Board affairs of an important district) with which our Premier is alleged to have been associated. These whispers have travelled very far and have reached the Viceroy and even the Secretary of State. A high Government official of the Secretariat talked of it to a friend of mine; another friend heard of it from Col. Muirhead. It is also rumoured that the present ministry will collapse or that the Premier will have to go.

I sincerely wish that the rumour will prove untrue, but as I heard it from so many different sources, I could not brush it aside and thought it my duty to write to you. I have been hearing of many other nasty things but I do not wish to write to you about them and upset you.

I earnestly hope that you are steadily recuperating health and spirits.

With many kind remembrances,

I am,  
Ever sincerely yours,  
R. Dalmia

Shri Rajendra Prasad  
Ziradei.

131. *To Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar*

P.O. Ziradei (Saran)  
22nd November 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

You will recollect that when we were in Calcutta in March last you met Dr. Jafri about whom both Sarat Babu and Maulana Azad had written and spoken. Dr. Jafri is a resident of Muzaffarpur district and had been a Mutwali of the Hooghly Imambara which has large property. He has since then been removed from there for reasons of party. I am enclosing two letters<sup>1</sup> which I have received from Sarat Babu. A man of his experience and ability could very well be provided in the Court of Wards. I understood at that time you were favourably inclined.



This is just to request you to do something for him.

I have received a letter from Shri Ranendranath Roy Choudhury of Muzaffarpur which I am enclosing.<sup>2</sup> From the talk which I had with you at Patna I gathered that someone with experience of Court of Wards work was insisted upon by the Board of Revenue and the competition was not really between him and Upendra Babu's son but all these on the one side and one with experience of the Court of Wards on the other. I am writing to him explaining the situation so that he may know the real situation and may be under no misapprehension. If there be any other opening I am sure you will do whatever is possible.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

<sup>1</sup>See Sarat Chandra Bose's letters dated 9.11.1938 and 17.11.1938 to Rajendra Prasad.

<sup>2</sup>Not included.

132. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

November 25, 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

I have received your letter of the 21st November together with copies of your correspondence with Sir Sultan. The case of an alleged murder which you have quoted in your letter discloses the extent to which communally minded mischiefmongers are prepared to go, but it is unfortunate that the poison has spread so far as to completely upset the balance of mind of responsible public men like Sir Sultan. It is a pity that you have been laid up with illness. Our friend Manu Subedar is going to Patna in the 2nd week of December and he will be staying with Sir Sultan as his guest. I am sending him copies of correspondence that has passed between you and Sir Sultan in order to post him up with facts.

I am anxious about your health.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Rajendra Babu  
Saran.

133. *From Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar*

Patna

26 November 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I am in receipt of your letter dated the 22nd November. The post of Assistant Manager has been advertised and after the applications have been received

appointment to the post will be made. I remember the case of Dr. Jafri. He saw me some time back at Patna and I told him that he need not be anxious. Sarat Babu wrote to me also and I replied to him that I remember his case. I do not know why they should trouble you so often when I have already told them that I will certainly consider his case when the time for it comes.

Ranendra Babu saw me at Muzaffarpur. I am myself feeling very great difficulty and I want to make my final decision in the matter after I have a talk with you. Certainly the Board wants an experienced man for the work. However, I will wait till you come to Patna.

I went that day to Sadaquat Ashram to see you, but on my arrival I learnt that you had left for Ziradei. I have to discuss some very important matters with you which can be done when you come to Patna. But you need not be in a hurry to return to Patna. You should come only when your health permits. Only the other day I was very much pained to read in the newspapers that you had an attack of asthma. However I hope you are doing quite well now and are making improvement in your health. It would be better if you kindly ask Chakradhar Babu to drop a line to me about your health once or twice a week so that we may be relieved of our anxiety.

Yours sincerely,  
S.K. Sinha

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
P.O. Ziradei (Saran).

134. *From Maharajadhiraja Sir Kameshwar Singh*

The Palace  
Darbhanga  
26th November 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Many thanks for your letter. I am very sorry to learn of your illness and trust that before long you will be restored to your former health and strength.

I note what you say regarding the issuing of the statement and trust that it will be issued before long.

With kind regards and good wishes.

I remain,  
Yours sincerely,  
Kameshwar Singh

Dr. Rajendra Babu  
Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat, Patna.

135. *From Rajkishore Prasad Sinha*

Sitamarhi Court  
29 November 1938

Sir,

Humble memorial of Rajkishore Prasad Sinha, pleader, P.O. Sitamarhi Court, Dist. Muzaffarpur, most respectfully sheweth:

1. That your memorialist is a candidate for one of the posts of Rent Reduction Officers which have recently been advertised to have fallen vacant under the Bihar Government and that the following facts which form the basis of your memorialist's claims to the above posts as well as other factors mentioned below have not been duly and justly considered by the appointing authorities of the Bihar Government and hence your memorialist has been eliminated from the list of candidates selected for interview for the above posts.

(a) That your memorialist is a distinguished graduate in Arts with Honours in Sanskrit and is also a distinguished B.L. of the Patna University and that your memorialist was thoroughly prepared for the Master of Law Degree examination of the Patna University but was refused permission by the Patna University authorities to appear at it in spite of your memorialist's readiness to pay more than prescribed fees for the examination has not yet been able to pass it on that account. A true copy of the letter of the Registrar, Patna University, about refusal of the above permission is attached herewith.

(b) That your memorialist has been practising at Sitamarhi Court since 1931 and has enclosed with his application for the above posts true copies of the certificates of Judicial Officers regarding his ability in conduct of rent suits in Court and character as a lawyer and also possesses knowledge of surveying for which he can produce certificate.

(c) That your memorialist took an active part in college games and societies and that he was Secretary of the G.B.B. College Sanskrit Society for a period of two years.

(d) That your memorialist was a candidate for the Bihar and Orissa Civil Service (Judicial Branch) in 1930 and was then interviewed by the Selection Committee in High Court and had reached the final stage of selection but could not succeed as ill luck would have it and that your memorialist had again applied for Provincial Judicial Service in 1931 and was the first nominee of the then District Judge of Muzaffarpur and Motihari and even in that year reached the last stage of selection in High Court but narrowly escaped success even that year.

(e) That regarding public activities your memorialist begs to state that he has organised an Association called Janta Hitaishi Sabha with about four hundred members mainly composed of poor peasants as well as petty landlords of all castes and creeds with its office at village Balua, P.S. Sitamarhi, with a view to reform the social, political and economic condition of the general public.

(f) That I have always tried to remove the miseries of the general public

through the help of the Association even at the cost of my practice whenever the public have required my services.

(g) That I have removed many of the long-standing grievances of Darbhanga Raj tenants who are also members of the Association by stopping illegal exactions of Raj Amlas from them and have got many of the essential needs of the tenants satisfied by Darbhanga Raj through the help of the above Association.

(h) That my brother who was President of Union Board, Suhai, P.S. Sitamarhi, for three years got many roads too constructed at appropriate places for the general public with Government grant of funds for the same.

(i) That but for my timely intervention and prompt action then agrarian problems of this part would have been acute and the feelings between Zamindars and tenants would have been embittered to such an extent that it would have been very difficult for the authorities to control the situation.

(j) That your memorialist being himself a cultivator has got ample knowledge of kisan difficulties and as such is better fitted to discharge duties of Rent Reduction Officer than the two candidates of Sitamarhi Bar who have been called for interview and who are townsmen and traders.

(k) That it is reliably rumoured in this part that candidates related to the Hon'ble Speaker of the Bihar Legislative Assembly as well as to the Hon'ble Premier of the Bihar Government have been summoned for interview in spite of their poor qualifications and other Bhumihar Brahman candidates have been excluded from interview at the outset in spite of their superior qualifications in order to make the chances of the nominees of the Hon'ble Speaker and Premier sure for success for the above posts.

(l) That Babu Surendra Thakur, a pleader of Darbhanga and a candidate for the post of Rent Reduction Officer, is brother-in-law of the Hon'ble Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Bihar and another candidate who is son-in-law of the Hon'ble Speaker of the Bihar Legislative Assembly and whose name is not known to me is also an important candidate to be taken note of. Both these candidates who are related to B. Ramdayalu Sinha (Speaker of the Bihar Legislative Assembly) have been called for interview and being the nominees of the Hon'ble Speaker who has recommended their names to the Hon'ble Premier of the Bihar Government are said to have two posts reserved for them. A copy of the letter of B. Surendra Thakur, pleader, Darbhanga (referred to in this paragraph) who is a candidate for the above post, addressed to me is attached herewith for your perusal and verification of these facts.

(m) That it is reliably understood that one Mahesh Prasad Sahi of Hajipur Bar who is closely connected with the Hon'ble Premier of Bihar and is probably his son-in-law in relationship has been called for interview and is sure to get one of the above posts in spite of the fact that he does not fulfil the condition of three years' practice at the Bar as required by the advertised rules and possesses no special qualifications.

(n) The two pleaders of Sitamarhi Bar who are decidedly inferior to your

memorialist in qualifications and are not even properly eligible for the above posts have been illegally called for interview. One of them, Babu Baidyanath Prasad, whose father is a substantial trader of community has not yet completed his three years' practice at the Bar as required by the so-called advertised appointment rules and the other, B. Ramjanak Prasad, who belongs to an important trading Vaishya family of Sitamarhi town is a most ordinary graduate in law and does not possess knowledge of survey for which he could have been preferred for interview with the appointing authorities.

(o) That no uniform principle has been maintained in calling candidates for interview for the above posts and even those candidates who are not eligible for the posts according to appointment rules have been selected for interview and thus the rules have been broken by the Government for reasons best known to them.

(p) That the opinions of the Public Service Commission, Ranchi, with respect to the claims of the various candidates referred to above will, I believe, expose lucidly the fallacious method adopted by the Government in selection of candidates for interview for the above posts.

(q) That your memorialist is at a loss to understand the criterion on which appointment rules have been improperly[and]unnecessarily relaxed in favour of many selected candidates for interview by the Government.

(r) That unless you intervene in the matter and take personal interest, your memorialist cannot expect justice from the authorities concerned.

Under the circumstances set forth above your memorialist prayeth that you be pleased to give consideration to the above facts and figures and issue necessary directions to the Government of Bihar for re-examining the claims of your memorialist to the above post impartially and award him one of the same. For these acts of kindness your memorialist shall ever pray for your long life and prosperity.

Rajkishore Prasad Sinha  
Pleader  
P.O. Sitamarhi Court  
Dist. Muzaffarpur

Dr. Rajendra Prasad  
President, Bihar Provincial Congress Committee  
Patna.

*Enclosure 1:*

(Copy of letter from Babu Surendra Thakur, Darbhanga, to Rajkishore Prasad Sinha, Pleader, Sitamarhi)

Laheriasera  
— 19 November 1938

My dear Rajkishore Babu,

Man proposes God disposes. Hon'ble Speaker has already recommended for two, one being his son-in-law and the other myself. This action was taken by him

before my letter for you reached him. He has expressed his inability to recommend your case. To recommend is to spoil the chance of all. You will very kindly excuse me this time.

Hoping to be excused,

I am,  
Yours sincerely,  
Surendra Thakur

*Enclosure 2:*

(Copy of letter from Rai Bahadur Kamla Prasad, Registrar, Patna University, to Rajkishore Prasad Sinha, Pleader, Sitamarhi)

Patna  
13th March 1938

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated February 20, 1934, I have the honour to inform you that special permission to appear at the M.L. examination cannot [be] granted.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
(Sd.) (*Illegible*)  
for Registrar

136. *To Sri Krishna Sinha, Prime Minister, Bihar*

Ziradei (Saran)  
29th November 1938

My dear Sri Babu,

Many thanks for your letter. I came away in [a] hurry as just on the day before I left I was so much worried by visitors with all kinds of problems that I felt that there was going to be a breakdown if I stayed longer. Since coming here I have had comparative rest but my trouble is so deep-seated that it has not yet subsided. Off and on I get a little temperature also, ranging between 90 and 100, which lasts continuously for several days when once it starts. Cough is there although at present it is not giving any difficulty. There is however nothing to be anxious about, only it makes me useless and helpless for the time being.

I have also many things to talk about but unfortunately all that has to wait for the present.

I have received a printed four-page leaflet published by one Shri S. Banamali,

B.A., LL.B. I wonder if you have seen it; if not, I would send you a copy which I have with me if you want it. It attempts many charges against the Ministry which are all without foundation. It indicates, however, that some bad propaganda against Congress Ministry is having some effect at least in otherwise unconnected non-political persons also. I know this gentleman and I do not think he has anything to do with any political party. I do not know how to deal with this kind of propaganda and this is one of the matters that I wanted to discuss with you.

I hope steps are being taken to give speedy relief to kisans by enforcing the legislation already passed.

Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga has been writing to me time after time for issuing a statement advising the tenants to pay their rent and I have been putting him off time after time. I think this has to be done. It would be better if it would be a leaflet containing not only an exhortation to pay rent but also to take advantage of the provisions of the new Acts. I would have sent you a draft but I do not feel up to making one in my present health. So kindly get a draft made.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

137. *From Gopi Kishore Lal*

Patna  
1st December 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I am sorry I could not reply to your letter of the 15th November from Ziradei earlier as I had to accompany the Hon'ble the Prime Minister in his tour of the Purnea district.

2. You are correct that the figures which you want to be compiled cannot be had from the settlement reports. The figures can, however, be compiled from the Abstract Khatians (Terij), which forms part of the Record of Rights of every village and which are available in the Record Room of each district.

3. But the only difficulty in this connection is that the Records of Rights of different districts were prepared in different years and some of them, e.g., of Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga, are of more than 30 years old. I enclose herewith a list showing roughly the years in which the Records of Rights of different districts were prepared.

4. The figures compiled from them cannot be called up-to-date, as many changes must have taken place in the holdings since the records were prepared. But still, in the absence of any better material available, I am of opinion that it may be worth while if the figures are in the first instance compiled from them, and then the percentage of variations may be gauged by preparing similar figures

from the latest *jamabandis* of certain *khas mahal* and Court of Wards villages. These *jamabandis* are reliable and can be depended on to show the extent of sub-infeudations of holdings since the date of the preparation of the Records of Rights of the villages under comparison.

5. I have shown your letter to the Prime Minister and I had a talk with him about it. He considers the collection of the figures suggested by you of prime importance and he thinks that necessary steps should be taken to collect them.

6. In case you decide to engage advanced students of economics to collect these figures under the supervision of their professors, orders will be issued by Government to give them every facility for the purpose. But if there be any difficulty in securing the services of students, etc., Government would get the figures compiled by their own staff by engaging some temporary hands, if necessary.

7. In Chhotanagpur we have any number of estates under the Wards and Encumbered Estates management and a big *khas mahal* in Palamau. In Bihar proper the only Wards Estate worth mentioning is the Bettiah Estate. I think it will be better if the figures are compiled of the districts of Palamau and Champaran in the first instance.

8. The settlement operations of Ranchi and Dhalbhum (in Singbhum district) are so recent that no comparison with *jamabandi* figures would be necessary.

9. Kindly let me know if you agree with my suggestions and whether you would prefer the compilation work to be done by the advanced students of economics.

Yours sincerely,  
Gopi Kishore

Enclosure not included.

138. From M. Yunus

Dar-ul-Mallik  
Fraser Road, Patna  
2 December 1938

My dear Babu Rajendra Prasad,

Many thanks for your letter of the 30th November and the enclosure with it.

I was rather concerned about your health from the report in the Press but the latest report is somewhat encouraging. I hope long ere this letter reaches you, you have completely recovered.

As regards the case of Moulvi Hafiz, I never heard that anyone suggested that the gentleman who has superseded Moulvi Hafiz is a relation of B. Anugrah Narain for I know that the gentleman is a Kayasth and no question of relationship therefore can arise. I will however write to you in detail in



connection with the enclosure after making further enquiry in the matter. Thanking you again for the trouble you have taken.

With best wishes, kind regards and wishing you speedy recovery.

Yours sincerely,  
Yunus

139. *To Jawaharlal Nehru*

P.O. Ziradei (Saran)  
4th December 1938

My dear Jawaharlalji,

I am sorry it has not been possible for me to meet you as yet and I am afraid it will be some little time before I can do so. My health has been causing trouble all these months and it will not be possible for me to go to Wardha for the next meeting of the Working Committee. I am hoping that after two or three weeks it will be possible to do some work.

I am writing this to find out what if anything can be done to help a Jewish friend from whom I have received a letter from Vienna. I am enclosing a copy which will speak for itself. It is significant that the letter is in type and does not give the address of the writer nor even his name in legible form but from the incident mentioned in the first paragraph I can spot the writer with whom I stayed in Vienna in 1928 when I visited the place in connection with the War Resisters' Conference. I do not know what kind of permit he refers to and whether such permits are available and if so from whom. Even if such permits could be obtained I do not know what these people could do in India where the problem of unemployment is as acute as anywhere. I shall be obliged if you kindly indicate to me what if anything can be done and how.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru  
Anand Bhawan, Allahabad.

Enclosure not included.

140. *From Khan Bahadur M.A. Khuhro, Secretary, Parliamentary Section, Sind Moslem League, Karachi*

124 Moslem Colony  
Karachi  
4th December 1938

Dear Sir,

I enclose herewith copies of my two letters which I have addressed to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in reply to his letter of the 19th of November, with regard to the Sind Ministerial tangle. As the things are being generally misrepresented by

interested persons I would request you to read the letters carefully and consider their import in all their aspects.

Yours faithfully,  
M.A. Khuhro  
Secretary  
Parliamentary Section  
Sind Moslem League, Karachi

*Enclosure 1:*

(From Khan Bahadur M.A. Khuhro, Secretary, Sind Moslem League  
Parliamentary Section, Karachi, to Vallabhbhai Patel)

124 Moslem Colony  
Karachi

Dear Mr. Patel,

In continuation of my letter of the 28th ultimo, I am sorry I have forgotten to deal with the two more points in your letter.

There was no effort on the part of the Moslem League to force a League Ministry on Khan Bahadur Allahbaksh. The offer came from K.B. Allahbaksh himself when Mr. Jinnah came to Sind, and even the idea that he should join Moslem League had emanated from him, without any move from our side. A few days before Mr. Jinnah was due to come here, K.B. Allahbaksh and his another Moslem colleague had begun making overtures to the League leaders. Two ministers uninvitedly came to the station to receive the League President, and the Revenue Minister sent an invitation, on behalf of Premier and himself, to Mr. Jinnah for Tea which, however, was refused. Then they came and saw Mr. Jinnah and gave him in writing that they had decided to join the League and that if the League so desired they would even resign.

After such an agreement was handed over by them to Mr. Jinnah the League Party followed the usual procedure, the one agreed to by K.B. Allahbaksh as well, of consulting its absentee members. Meanwhile they received some offer from the local Congress people and as they were not sure as to what would be their fate in the new dispensation of the things, they resiled from their agreement, so late as on the 12th October. As a matter of fact the present Ministers do not believe in placing themselves under any well-disciplined Party and therefore they, having no fixed principles of their own, are playing one Party against another and fooling all. I do not think it is proper or honourable on the part of any Party to sell its principle, for the sake of, and descend so low as to devise subterfuges in order to keep, such a ministry in office which has neither Party nor any policy, nor any programme.

The question of assessment was not referred to Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan at the initiative of the League Party. The move was made by K.B. Allahbaksh himself

and as the League was sure of its case it had no hesitation in having it reviewed by anybody.

Yours sincerely,

M.A. Khuhro

Secretary

Sind Moslem League Parliamentary Section  
Karachi

*Enclosure 2:*

(From Khan Bahadur M.A. Khuhro, Secretary, Parliamentary Section, Sind Moslem League, to Vallabhbhai Patel)

124 Moslem Colony

Karachi

28th November 1938

Dear Mr. Patel,

I got your letter of the 19th instant on 25th here, in which, firstly, you have made a grievance of the fact that "although the Parliamentary Sub-Committee had made its position clear in this matter and published its decision in the Press, I and my friends of the Muslim League continued to misrepresent your attitude, both in Press and on the platform, when all our efforts failed to form a League Ministry", and, secondly, you have endeavoured to know as to what is the position of my Party with regard to the assessment question.

Let me first of all make it clear that much of what has been broadcast by the Sind Hindu Press, which for communal considerations is personally interested in the retention of the present Sind Ministry, with regard to Karachi League Conference, is incorrect and misleading. It is our legitimate grievance that the Hindu Press has in some cases been fabricating news in order to misrepresent our side, and engender an atmosphere of unnecessary alarm and suspicion. It is however correct only so far, that, there was a resolution passed in a meeting held in Karachi, in which Congress had been condemned on the following counts:

1. That it had not carried out the promise it had held out to the country in the Sind Congress Party's statement of July 16 and 25th.
2. That in spite of such unequivocal statements, which were said to be conclusive and final and left no room for the subsequent inactivity, passivity, and opening up of secret negotiations, the Congress Party entered into a secret pact with the Ministry to ratify which you and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were subsequently invited.
3. That the Sind Congress Party was not satisfied with the conduct of the Sind Ministry even before the assessment issue had cropped up, as was evident from the letters addressed by some prominent Congress Assembly Party

members to Mr. G.M. Sayed in June 1938, and yet it played many somersaults, even after the assessment issue had arisen and the Ministry had invoked the Congress condemnation. This change in the attitude of the Congress Party towards the Ministry was attributed to the communal colour lent to the ministerial question by the Hindu Press on this question.

4. That the Wardha decision of neutrality was unsatisfactory in as much as it had deprived ten constituencies, who were represented by the Congress members and who were affected by the assessment proposals, of the opportunity of having their say on the assessment question in the Assembly when no-confidence motion was to be moved. The Sub-Committee having held that the conduct of the Ministry was most objectionable there was no sense in its having ordered the local members to desist from voting against the Ministry on the day of reckoning.
5. That when K.B. Allahbakhsh and his Moslem colleagues had signed an agreement to join the Muslim League, the Congress Party, influenced by extraneous considerations, reopened the matter with the Khan Bahadur after the lapse of nearly two months' time, called a couple of meetings of its own to find out a formula whereby the Ministry should anyhow be saved from defeat. This conduct on the part of the Sind Congress was characterised as carrying something incompatible with the position of a body which claims to stand firm for the principles.
6. That even though the Ministry had failed to summon any session of the Assembly, after the brief session of May last, yet the Congress Party had remained completely silent over it, in spite of the fact that as early as in July last, Mr. R.K. Sidhwa, the Secretary of the Congress Party, had written to the ministers that the session must be called latest in August. It was greatly surprising that a Party which was so keen on having a session in July or August had ceased to realise the importance of such a clear violation of the constitutional rights of the people, when the Assembly was not called even so late as in November. In the opinion of the meeting it revealed the fact that the Congress Party wanted to give time to the Ministry to consolidate its position by means and methods which were not in any way in keeping with the Congress standards of morality.
7. That the Congress Party directly and indirectly wanted to make the wishes of the Moslem majority ineffective.

You will, I hope, agree with me that this indictment of the Congress policy was based on sound reasons and cold logic, and if the Congress can concede to its adversaries also the right of free speech and unfettered expression of opinion there will not remain much substance in the grievance which you have made in your letter. But why should it worry you what the Moslems have said in their meetings? Is the Congress going to measure its sword with other organisations even at the cost of its own principles, declarations and manifestoes?

As to the second point, you are not unaware of the attitude we have adopted

with regard to the assessment question. I do not think we have given you any reason which you may use as an additional ground for showing still more relaxation and concessions to the present Ministry. We have been carefully watching the Congress proceedings and I can assure you that my Party is not going to do anything which is against the interests of the country. I would only request you to decide the question on its own intrinsic merits and not allow extraneous considerations and side issues to twist and warp the judgement of the Congress High Command.

I am glad to hear from you that you are not unaware of the attitude of Mussalmans of Sind regarding Allahbaksh Ministry. What the Moslems of Sind demand from the Congress is that it should adhere to the statement made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in the course of his talks with the Moslem members of the Sind Legislature here. He had very clearly said that in the Moslem majority Provinces the Congress did not want to divide the Moslems or do anything which may make the Moslem majority ineffective. If the Congress High Command stands by that statement of Maulana Saheb and if there is no pulling of strings on communal lines even inside the High Command, the Congress on that one ground alone must not support Allahbaksh Ministry which is opposed tooth and nail by the Moslem majority in this Province.

Before this one ground alone, which involves the question of principle, all other matters including the assessment issue, should sink into oblivion. The Moslems of India are keenly watching whether the Congress High Command is prepared to honour the understanding given to the Moslems by the Maulana Saheb.

You have not been pleased to allow me to have an idea of the formula into which must have crystallised the recent conversations between the Sind Premier and the Congress leaders at Wardha.

The *Sind Observer*, which for all practical purposes is an organ of the Ministry, has published a summary of the latest agreement between the Sind Congress Assembly Party and the Ministry which provides that if the latter postponed the assessment scheme for 12 months, and brought forward same or any other measure for enhancing assessment after the lapse of that period, the Congress Party shall support the Ministry in enforcing it; because it is said that the Congress High Command assumes that Sind is a deficit Province, that there is a lot of room for increase in the land taxation and that therefore the High Command has promised that in case Allahbaksh Ministry proposed any increase in assessment hereafter they would not enforce the Haripura (or Karachi) resolution of the Congress on this issue.

I do not know how far this statement is correct but in case there is some substance in it I cannot help observing that the Congress would be practising deception on the people if it secured the postponement merely with a view to assist the Ministry to enforce it after twelve months. It will even mean that the Congress decision against the assessment scheme and its demand for postponement was a mere hoax to hoodwink the people and pull them into a false

sense of security for the present. There is no ground for the Congress to assume that there is any scope for increase in land taxation in Sind. The Congress is already committed to the opposite view, through its Karachi and Haripura resolutions, through the statements of its members on the floor of the Sind Assembly in August 1937, and through Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram's statement of July 3, 1938.

Agriculturists in Sind are indeed hard hit during the present depression and under the existing circumstances there is no capacity left in them to bear any extra burden of taxation. I will even go as far as to say that it will be positively cruel to put any more burden on them. On the contrary it is high time that Government should re-examine the whole question of land taxation afresh and find out ways and means to alleviate the burden of small *khatedars* who are now-a-days in a sorry plight and their needs are to be lightened as quickly as possible.

When Congress Government in other Provinces have done their utmost (Madras, Bombay & C.P.) to reduce land tax on small *khatedars* and have granted liberal remissions to poor agriculturists why Sind alone should be singled out for [a] differential treatment?

The Premier also has committed himself to the view that not only the increase implied by the new scheme, but even the existing rates of assessment are grossly inequitable. I would refer you to his speech in the Bombay Council on 27th March 1935 (Council Debate, Vol. XLI, Part XXXII, pages 1803-5), and his speech again in the Sind Assembly on August 9, 1937, the perusal of which will prove to you that even according to the Premier himself there is no room for any increase in the land taxation. Will it under the existing circumstances therefore be desirable on the part of Congress to commit itself to [an] increase in the assessment? As regards the question of deficit you perhaps do not know that Sind has been for a long time groaning under an unduly heavy burden of administrative expenditure and the Reorganisation Committee, of which I was also a member, has recently pointed out that there is clear room for retrenchment to the extent of about 40 lakhs of rupees. The present Premier, instead of retrenching, has been increasing most unnecessary and superfluous administrative expenditure by creating new posts, without even seeking the previous sanction of the Assembly. I would not be surprised if the present ministry throws that report of Reorganisation Committee appointed by Hidayatullah Ministry, which has laboured so hard and has produced a report covering over five hundred pages, and has suggested a saving of no less than forty lakhs of rupees out of the total income and expenditure of Province of only about three hundred lakhs, into the waste-paper basket.

Besides, I deem it necessary to bring it to your notice that the present Ministry has not passed a single Act for the betterment of general masses or the agricultural classes, contrary to what other Congress-ruled Provinces have done, although Khan Bahadur Allahbakhsh's Ministry has been in office now for over eight months.

I do hope that bearing in mind all these misdeeds of the present Ministry the

Congress High Command will deem it proper not to have anything to do with "Allahbaksh Ministry", and will advise the Sind Congress Assembly Party to vote against this routen Ministry notorious for its inactivity and weakness.

I am,  
Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Khuhro

Copy forwarded with compliments to the President, Indian National Congress, for information.

M.A. Khuhro

141. *To J.B. Kripalani*

P.O. Ziradei (Saran)  
4th December 1938

My dear Kripalaniji,

I am afraid it will not be possible for me to attend the next meeting of the Working Committee. My health deteriorated considerably after my return from Delhi. It is only during the last three or four days that there is a turn for the better.

At the meeting of the Working Committee at Delhi it was decided in a general way that the next session of the Congress would be held in the last week of February. At that time we did not see that Muharram falls between the 21st February and 2nd of March. These are the ten days when the Musalmans observe the festival. The Working Committee has therefore in fixing the actual dates of the Congress to bear this in mind. I think it is desirable that the actual dates should now be announced. The annual Sammelan of the Gandhi Seva Sangh is going to be held in Champaran next year. The idea is to have it in March. It takes about a week. Bapu has also to go to the Frontier. It is therefore necessary to so arrange the date of this Sammelan as to avoid a clash with his Frontier visit. You will be there and are likely to meet Kishore Lal Bhai at Wardha. Kindly after fixing the dates of the Congress discuss with him and have the date of the Sammelan also fixed.

I think the Committee will take up my Report on the Bengali-Bihari question. It should not be held up on account of my absence.

I think you all will decide something about the Presidentship of the next Congress also. Please communicate to me what decision is arrived at.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

142. *To Gopi Kishore Lal, Revenue Department, Patna*

P.O. Ziradei (Saran)

5th December 1938

My dear Gopi Babu,

I have received your letter dated 1st December and thank you for it. I want the information to be collected accurately. If the Government can do it, it is not necessary to ask the students to undertake the work. I suggested that only in case the Government was not prepared to incur the necessary expenditure. I would suggest that small areas might be selected as samples and the information collected. That would give us some idea both as regards the amount of work involved in collecting the information and in regard to the nature and value of the information so collected and then we could decide if it is worth while undertaking the work on an extensive scale. As you have rightly pointed out, the Settlement records are already old and may not give us correct up-to-date information and it may be thus waste of energy to collect such obviously defective information for any practical work. It is necessary first to decide whether it is worth while collecting the information and for that purpose it is well to take only samples. I think this would not take much time to collect and I leave it to you to select the samples with only this suggestion that they should be representative of the different localities in the Province.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

143. *From Raghunandandas, President, All India Pasi Mahasammelan*

THE ALL INDIA PASI MAHASAMMELAN

Monghyr  
5 December 1938

Dear Dr. Rajendra Babu,

I am sending herewith some copies of my presidential speeches delivered at the Pasi Sammelan at Allahabad, Biharsharif, Barh and Gaya. I am propagating in the community to give up intoxication and to sell either sweet toddy or to prepare jaggery from sweet toddy.

Hon'ble B. Anugrah N. Singh in his opening speech assured the Pasis at Patna that something will be done before the Prohibition is introduced in any part of Bihar. You had also assured us in some instances that some arrangements will be



done before the Prohibition is introduced in Bihar.

I had also requested B. Jaglal Choudhary to make some arrangements for Pasis when Prohibition will be introduced here.

I am sorry to inform you that I am getting letters after letters from Chapra for their unemployments. They are starving and they all depend on us. I am at a loss to understand what to do and what not to do.

Toddy selling was their traditional occupation and now they are sitting idle.

I am enclosing herewith the copy of the Hon'ble Minister's letter to me for the benefits of Pasis and what I replied him, but sorry when some candidates and some petitions reached to B. Jaglal Choudhary, he flatly refused to give any stipend to the candidates. They all went away in hopeless condition.

You also explained [to] Mr. Choudhary and myself in the Cottage Hospital that a scheme had already been forwarded to Mr. Choudhary for taking steps before prohibition but to no effect.

Now, Sir, I assure you that Mr. Choudhary will not make any arrangements for poor Pasis unless you do something.

If you please send me a copy of your scheme, I hope I would be able to do something further. We all depend on you and your help will be of great use for Pasis.

An early reply is solicited.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,  
Raghunandandas

*Enclosure:*

(Copy of letter from Jaglal Choudhary)

5 December 1938

As total prohibition is shortly going to be enforced, the problem of a large number of people being thrown out of employment stares us in the face. The vendors of wine and drugs have no difficulties in investing money over some other business but the condition of poor Pasis [is] quite difficult. They are generally very poor and know no other business than that of toddy. Large numbers of them come to us daily and request us to provide them with employment and sometimes they have gone to the length of putting forth unreasonable demands. Though we have a right to refuse to meet unreasonable demands of theirs, we cannot afford to [let] them starve if they can be made to take to some other honest mode of living. So, we want to see if we can give them training in utilising the palm juice in manufacturing sugar from it and also in certain handicrafts such as tailoring, weaving, tanning and shoe making, paper making, and such other things as from time to time may suggest to us and we invite them individually to tell us what they want to learn in order to enable us to

see how far we are in a position to help them.

As preparing schemes and financing them is a question which takes time we would like to know the wishes of our Pasi brethren by the end of this month so that something can be done for them before the Assembly sits next.

Yours,  
J. Choudhary

Copy forwarded to Dr. Raghunandandas, President, All India Pasi Sammelan.

144. *From J.B. Kripalani*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Swaraj Bhawan  
Allahabad  
7th December 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Thanks for your letter. I have been reading about your health in the papers. I am glad that you are better now. You might have read in the Press that Maulana Sahib came here yesterday to meet Jawaharlal. Subhas Babu has come this morning by air from Karachi. He leaves this evening. Jawaharlalji and myself were not for disturbing you. But Maulana Sahib and Subhas Babu thought that your presence will be necessary. Not that you need attend our meetings but that you should be there for consultation specially on your report about the Bihari-Bengali controversy. I have therefore just sent you a telegram under the signature of my colleague requesting you to come if your health would not be adversely affected by the journey. It was thought that as Wardha climate agrees with you it may not be difficult for you to come over.

I had already thought about Moharram and this question of Congress dates will be discussed by the Working Committee. I think we will fix the date in March after the Moharram.

So far as I have been able to sense opinion, it is for Maulana Sahib. I think there will be some talk at Wardha but it will be with Bapu. Bapu's opinion so far is for the Maulana Sahib.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,  
J.B. Kripalani

145. *From, Hafiz Zafar Hasan, M.L.A.*

Basarbigha  
P.O. Soh Sarai  
Patna  
8th December 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

While I was at Hazaribagh along with Babu Mathura Pershad Saheb, and Syed Sahab Ozair Munimi Saheb I learnt with anxiety that you are again indisposed. I pray to God for your early recovery to guide us to the goal of independence.

You know that at the time of the formation of the Congress Ministry representations were made by means of letters and telegrams to include me in it with *Industries* as my portfolio, but as I had not signed the Congress pledge till then so my name was dropped.

When everything was over I signed the pledge as I had decided to join the Congress Party when the Assembly was in session.

Since then I have strictly adhered to the Congress creed and have not been affected by any amount of pressure brought on me by the Moslem League on different occasions in different forms.

Sometimes they threatened me by anonymous letters to put an end to my life, and also passed a resolution of no confidence against me in open session of the Moslem League presided over by Mr. Chowdhry Khaliquzzaman of U.P. which was seriously resented and condemned by the members of my community throughout the Province of Bihar and in Calcutta, the reports of which were widely circulated throughout India by my community people.

In spite of all these threats and votes of no confidence I have not budged an inch from my political creed, and I am trying my level best to strengthen the cause of the Congress.

In the Assembly, I am afraid, the Hon'ble Dr. Syed Mahmud cannot claim to have sided [with] the Congress Party in communal matters so openly as I have done.

The reason is that he is bound by the *Amarat pledge* which he has signed; such is not the case with me.

I have come to know that the Hon'ble Dr. Syed Mahmud is trying for the inclusion of Mr. Abdul Jalil, M.L.A., in the Cabinet because both of them belong to the *Amarat Group*. Mr. Jalil belongs not only to the *Independent Party* but he is also the *morid* (disciple) of Phulwarisharif Shah Saheb, and is in full control of *Amarat*.

I, as a well-wisher of the Congress, assure you that Mr. Jalil will prove to be an undesirable element in the Cabinet. Hon'ble Dr. Syed Mahmud is trying to create a *coalition Ministry* which I, as a member of the Congress Party, strongly protest.

The members of the Independent Party formed the *interim Ministry*, and now they are trying to enter into the Congress Cabinet, which in my humble opinion should not be allowed.

I am not a time-server. I want to serve the country and have been doing so since 1909.

During the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920 when *Mahatmaji* honoured Biharsharif, along with yourself, by his visit, the Momin community here, numbering several thousand, presented an address of welcome to *Mahatmaji*, and it was my humble self who read it.

Mahatmaji was highly pleased with the Momins and gave a very hopeful and encouraging reply which you also remember.

He also said that in the whole Province of Bihar he had selected to address the Momins of Biharsharif, as Biharsharif was the most important centre where the Momins were most advanced.

Last year when the Hon'ble Ministers of Bihar visited Biharsharif the Momins presented an address of welcome to them in spite of the most severe opposition by the Moslem Leaguers.

In the end I request you not to overlook the claim of a Biharsharif Momin at the time of appointing a Moslem Minister in the Bihar Cabinet when he has been strictly adhering to the Congress creed both inside and outside the Assembly.

I trust that when *Mahatmaji* has honoured the Biharsharif Momins, you in your turn will do likewise and not disappoint them.

Further I wish to add that the Momins of Biharsharif are the first among the Mohamadans of this Province to pass a resolution of no confidence against the Moslem League and to present an address of welcome to the Congress Ministers.

Biharsharif is also the birth-place of *Jamiathul Mominin* which has now spread throughout India and Burma. With regard to my experience in *cottage industries* you will be pleased to know that I have been connected with this for the last 25 years.

The Government of Bihar appointed me as the General Secretary of the Bihar Weaving School which the Government started for giving advanced training in weaving to the hand-weavers of this Province.

It was through my efforts that the flyshuttle looms were first introduced in this Province.

In 1917 I was selected by the Government to help the *Indian Industrial Commission* in this Province. In 1926 I was a candidate for the post of the Director of Industries, and was called for an interview by Mr. B.A. Collins but the post was offered by Sir Takwurddin, the then Minister, to a Bengalee gentleman who was an Engineer.

*Pandit Jawaharlal Nehruji Saheb* has sent the following message to the Momins of Biharsharif (his letter No. E-26/2644 dated July 16th, 1937):

I should like to assure you that we are fully aware of the importance of the Momin community and we shall gladly do everything in our power to help it.

Yours sincerely,  
Hafiz Zafar Hasan

146. *From S. Banamali*

Shanti Kutir  
Narmada Tat  
Ranapur  
9th December 1938

My dear Dr. Rajendra Prasadji,

Being a disciple of Sri Aurobindo, I have practically no concern with the present politics where expectations and excitements, despair and despondency reign supreme; but being a Biharee by birth, I had to give free vent to my feelings regarding the "Illegalities and Irregularities, Favouritism and Corruption" etc. in Bihar, as have already been noted in connection with other Congress administered Provinces of India in the recent issues of his much esteemed paper, *Harijan*, of Mahatma Gandhi himself and the Provincial Congress Committee, their Working Cabinets and the Provincial Governments of the U.P. and others concerned have been already asked for "Careful and Immediate Handling" by the said Mahatma.

I, therefore, solicit your favour of going through my three leaflets numbered 1, 2 and 3 enclosed herewith and telling me at your early convenience the steps which you have been pleased to take up.

I usually write on spiritual topics and some of which had been handed over to you last year summer when you were pleased to meet me in spite of other heavy and serious engagements in the Sadaquat Ashram, Patna. I am sending a fresh one marked No. A\* regarding the Divine Devotion for your perusal and your opinion, if you like.

I am,  
Your well wisher,  
S. Banamali

\*Not included.

*Enclosure 1:*

#### A WORD TO THE POWERFUL CONGRESS AUTHORITIES

'To capture political powers' is the policy openly declared by the present President of the Congress, many a times and oft. But to capture them and to

concentrate in one place and not to release and divide them among men in general would generate a political constipation resulting in auto-toxication. To gather them and not to distribute them equally is to bring forth an economical embarrassment. To take [and] not to give is to impede the political circulation and to expedite the suicidal policy in the end. To seize upon powers down to the minor details of Local or Municipal Boards or Unions is to promulgate oligarchy and to suffocate democracy. To capture what is already released by the British Government to the local person is to recapture the released and to dominate the freed.

Several decades passed, the British Government did bestow the privilege of local self-government under the names of Municipalities, Boards, etc. which the local bodies are enjoying up till now without any interruption. The power of supersession is a master power and a sufficiently effective weapon in the hands of the Congress Ministry which has stepped in the shoes of the British Government, making it, excise etc. as the subjects transferred to the Congress Government. But it hankers after much more. The power of supersession and nomination too is not deemed enough. It wants every member to be elected according to its tickets and instructions, leaving practically no choice to the voter. Is it propagating democracy or dictatorship in the minutest details? Is it not the tyranny of the society upon the individuality?

Moreover, this method of Congress ticketting (or labelling) and sealing the free play of election in such local matters is not only an injustice to the general principle but also a blockade to the genuine and devoted Congress workers of the locality, as has been quoted by Mahatma Gandhi in his paper, *Harijan*, dated 25th September 1938: "Rich and unscrupulous persons are controlling the affairs of the Congress organisation, keeping skilfully the genuine and devoted workers out of their way."

Lastly and not the least important is to weed out the untruthful and corrupted Congressmen, instead of planting them to a responsible or a profitable post, is the demand and the command of Mahatma Gandhi who openly declares in his *Harijan* dated 25th September 1938:

That violence, untruth and corruption have made inroads enough in Congress to warrant drastic measures in order to prevent decay overtaking the great organisation.—Mahatma Gandhi

*Enclosure 2:*

#### ELECTION OR SELECTION? •

Sir S. Radhakrishnan, one of the great patriots and deep philosophers of the day, has recently said, "Spirit of democracy is more important than form" in response to the Address presented to him by the Madras Corporation.

Undoubtedly, by constant assertions and strenuous efforts of some of the

eminent and broad-minded leaders and advocates of democracy, the Indian National Congress has been able 'to capture full political powers' in several Departments of the British regime and the local self-government, under the names of Municipality, Board and Union, is one of them. But instead of using the full powers in furthering the spirit of democracy, it is straitening it by ticketting or labelling candidates in Municipal or Board elections under the big seal of Congress, coercing the free play of the franchise. Rightly, the said patriot and philosopher has remarked, "Our individuality is being crushed."

To keep up the spirit of the local self-government or of the democracy on a small scale, British Government never ticketted candidates in such local matters, nor ever pressed the public to vote in its favour; but the Congress Government, [instead] of improving upon it, is narrowing the democracy by confining it to sealed candidates. Is it raising the spirit of democracy or lowering it? Is it not exercising undue influence in election matters by the Congress Government in full power? Is it election or quasi-selection? Can election under undue influence and such coercion be considered valid? Do not law and equity point such elections towards nullity? Remember: 'The wise do not swerve an inch from the path of justice' (Politics).

N.B. Is the Congress Government, having its own Minister at the helm and head of the local self-government, justified by law and equity in setting up its own ticketted candidates in Board or Municipal elections? If not, whether such ticketted elections are void or valid?

### *Enclosure 3:*

#### AN OPEN PLEA FOR THE CORRECTIVE AND EFFECTIVE CONTROL IN BIHAR

Not only the Province of Bihar, but also the whole of India is proud of having Dr. Rajendra Prasad, M.A., LL.D., as the ex-President of the Indian National Congress, at the head of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee and in the Cabinet of the Congress High Command. No doubt, his manifold and multi-sided activities and engagements in much more important and encompassing matters of the country at large, warrant very little time at his disposal for probing into the details of certain local matters, which would expose something stinking at the bottom and require the handling of an efficient doctor like his good and honourable self for successful operations, painless dressing and effective redressings.

2. Almost all concerned are aware of much unfavourable comment expressed at the needless extravagance giving rise to big travelling bills of the Ministers of Saadullah Cabinet of Sylhet. On close enquiry, the same thing several times multiplied will be found in Bihar too. The report regarding the Ministerial T.A. & T.E. goes up to Rs.1,000 (one thousand rupees) per day even. The pay of all the four comes to a little less than even Rs.70 (seventy rupees) per day, but the

allowance goes up to Rs.1,000 (Rupees one thousand) a day. [Is] the allowance commensurate with the pay? Is it not repugnant to the altruistic sense of the Office Acceptance by the Congress? Is it not diametrically opposed to the sacred injunction of Mahatma Gandhi, who has repeatedly proclaimed that none should enter the arena of the Congress with the sordid motive of gain or profit, self-seeking or self-aggrandizement?

3. The touring programme should be laid out with certain objectives in view and on [a] utilitarian basis by the Provincial Congress Working Committee and never be left to the whims of the Ministers. The points gained or lost or to what extent attained should be properly recorded for inspection and future guidance. Squandering of the public money or the depletion of the Provincial Exchequer by our own men even should be regarded as bad and uneconomical as by others and an effective check should be put upon it for the greatest good of the largest number.

4. Nepotism, of which Dr. Khare, the ex-Premier of C.P., was charged, is not less prevalent here. The better claim and the superior talent of Prof. Vidyarthi have been shunted back and the brother of the Premier got the better of the said Prof. by the sheer force of being closely related to the Premier. Is it not the glaring illustration and daring application of the underlying principle of nepotism?

5. The rumour of gratification too is diffusing throughout the length and breadth of the Province. It is gaining ground by repeated visitings to the magnates of the big States and erections of magnificent buildings where the Mahatma's principle of simple living and high thinking is being hammered into the dogma of double dealing and high living.

6. The setting [afoot] of "the anti-Ministry propaganda" in Bihar by certain Congressmen, and its consideration in the Provincial C.C. meeting on the 3rd November 1938, reflect sure symptoms of discontent even in the Congress camp itself.

7. Under the guise of liberal provincialism, the claim of genuine Biharees are being pushed back, without even a tinge of similar treatment from other sides. Lala Harbans Lal, a Punjabee gentleman, has been strangely promoted from the Deputy Inspector of Primary Schools to the Inspector of High Schools of the Main Division, Patna, the capital of Bihar; while the better claim and the superior capacity of Shah Saheb and other genuine Biharees have been ignored and all of them have been shunted to the siding, the main line of the Patna Division being covered by a Punjabee. When lions are being bearded in their own den, where else can they expect a respectable place or command a high regard?

8. Municipal Administrations by Congressmen at Gaya and Khagole are deplorable and will repeat elsewhere too, if the method of election is not radically changed, the cooperation of the tried and experienced persons is not sought for the efficient administration by the shrewd and sagacious Controller directly and never through the proposed co-option, and if the reactionary tendencies are not curbed and controlled by the High Command of the Province in such and other matters too.



9. Prohibition in the district of Chapra has decidedly given rise to an extensive sale of foreign liquors and has rendered thousands of families of Pasis (palm-tappers) and others useless and out of employment by a single stroke of the Excise Minister. The campaign of prohibition should proceed by slow degrees, vanguarded by a sincere band of temperance preachers and ventilated by openings for the unemployed. Otherwise, something desperate or disastrous, unpleasant or unprecedented may follow in its train.

10. In the words of Prof. N.G. Ranga, M.L.A. (Central), General Secretary of the All India Kisan Sabha, "the demands of the kisans are yet very moderate". Hence, the prerogatives of the peasantry against the gentry, i.e., of the Kastkars against the Zamindars, should be better attended to. The tillers of the soil, the toilers of the mines and the moilers of the mills (i.e. the cultivators and the labourers) do naturally require much more sympathy at the hands of the Congress. The growers of grain and feeders of men do never expect a breach of the election-pledges.

Under the circumstances, it is, by moral persuasion, the only instrument in our hands, earnestly solicited that a close and independent enquiry be made at an early date and the above points be introduced, for consideration and necessary action, some way or other in the Agenda before the meeting of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee for the radical uplift and the general good of the Province:

"Desiring the welfare of the people" (Gita).

147. *To Vallabhbhai Patel (Camp: Wardha)*

P.O. Ziradei (Saran)  
10th December 1938

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I have been following the struggle going on in Rajkot and have [read] in the Press that Maniben has been arrested and Mridula Ben has proceeded to take her place. It is also reported that Ba will also be going there. I wonder how long the State will be able to hold out as there can be no doubt that it will have to yield if only the people continue to be firm and undivided.

I received a telegram from Subhas Babu, Jawaharlalji and Maulana Azad asking me to come to Wardha for rest and change and also for consultation. I am sorry I do not feel fit enough to undertake the trying journey to Wardha although if I were there I could without difficulty attend the important discussions in the Committee.

We had set up a candidate at a by-election in a Muslim constituency. We have lost heavily against the Muslim League candidate. We were told by all the

Congress workers there that there was a very good chance of our candidate winning and there was practically no Muslim League in existence in that district. But somehow or other all those calculations [have] turned out to be false. There is a large population of Momins (weavers) in the district [of] Hazaribagh and as Momins have been keeping aloof from the League it was hoped that they would support the Congress candidate. Some of their leaders had approached Maulana also with promise of support. It seems in the end they voted against our candidate although our candidate Maulvi Razak was a local person and has been working ever since 1920 and claimed to [be] a Momin while his rival was a Khan Bahadur Zamindar from the district of Patna. We could not have lost unless the Momins voted against us as about 80% of the voters belong to that community. The exact figures are not known but it seems our candidate secured about 800 as against over 3,000 votes in favour of his rival.

There was another by-election on account of the death of Shri Chaturanan Das in the district of Darbhanga. Our nominee Shri Chetnath Jha has been returned uncontested. Another vacancy has occurred on account of the sudden death of Shri Upendra Nath Mukherji alias Patal Babu in the Bhagalpur Division Urban Constituency. We are going to set up a candidate and the Provincial Working Committee will decide on the 16th of this month and shall wire to you for sanction of the person selected. It is rumoured that the Hindu Sabha will set up a candidate but I do not think there is any truth in that rumour, but even if a candidate is run by the Sabha and a contest takes place, our candidate will have a good chance.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

148. *From J.B. Kripalani*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE  
Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad

Wardha  
December 11, 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Your report on the Bengali-Bihari controversy was considered by the Working Committee and the Committee agreed generally with your conclusions. In some more or less minor matters they felt that a change would be desirable and we have drafted a resolution accordingly. We are, however, not issuing this resolution till we have referred it to you. We felt that if you agree to these minor changes it would be better if you could incorporate them in your own conclusions.

I might draw your attention to two of these changes. In regard to domicile,

birth has been included. Regarding trade or business, the Committee felt that it would be better for a government not to suggest to firms and factories to make a particular kind of appointment. Howsoever one might like to avoid it, this would in effect amount to considerable pressure and injustices might result.

If you agree with the draft of the Working Committee resolution it will be issued to the Press; otherwise it will be considered afresh.

With pranams.

Yours sincerely,  
J.B. Kripalani

Shri Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram  
Dighaghat, Patna.

149. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

Camp: Wardha  
December 13, 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

I have received your letter of the 10th instant. I do not think that I will be in Bombay in the last week of December, but if the deputation of vaidyas would like to meet me wherever I am, I would certainly give them time. You know that the Bill has already been passed in Bombay and the Government have included all possible amendments in that Bill. If the deputation desires any change in the Bill, it is too late; but if they want any encouragement by way of help, their suggestion will certainly meet with careful consideration.

I have received another letter of the same date from you today. Maniben is still in jail as [an] undertrial prisoner. The struggle will not last long if the State is left alone, but there are the Princes and the Political Department who are pulling strings from behind.

I know that you were not able to undertake the journey. I only hope you will be able to resume your duties soon. In Orissa matters remain pending. The Viceroy's sanction is held up because of our resolution to hold a conference in which you are to be present. Is it possible for you to go to Orissa even after a fortnight or in the last week of this month; because it would be preferable to stick to our resolution instead of changing it now. I wish we had not contested the Muslim League by-election. If we would have left things alone, perhaps some people would have contested independently and it would indeed have been better. I am sorry to hear about Chaturanan Babu's death. In that constituency I do not think that you will find any difficulty in defeating the Hindu Mahasabha candidate if put up.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Ziradei (Saran Distt.).

150. *To Vallabhbhai Patel and Abul Kalam Azad*P.O. Ziradei (Saran)  
14th December 1938

My dear Vallabhbhai and Maulanasaheb,

Raja Bahadur of Tiloi has been recently elected President of the British Indian Association of Oudh (Taluqdars' Association) and Babu Kamakhyadutt Ram, the Secretary of the Association, with some other friends have seen me in connection with the proposal for a settlement of the question of tenancy legislation. I understand that the meeting of some Taluqdars which was held on the 27th October last and which decided against arbitration or decision by the Parliamentary Sub-Committee was unauthorised and invalid inasmuch as it was not a meeting of the Executive Committee or of the General Body of the Association but only of some Taluqdars. As against this there is a previous resolution of the General Body authorising the Raja Bahadur of Tiloi to take necessary steps in regard to the tenancy question. In any case I am told there is considerable change in the situation and the recently elected President thinks that a majority of the Taluqdars would like to have a settlement. The position of the Zamindars of Agra Province is the same as before, that is, [the] Nawab of Chhatari and his Association favour a settlement. They are now anxious to have our intervention. I have explained to Raja Bahadur that the resolution of 27th October, valid or invalid, still stands and unless something is done to indicate clearly that the Taluqdars and Zamindars desire our intervention it will not be possible for us to move in the matter. On the other side the Assembly is engaged in considering the clauses of the Bill. But it is not likely to finish this consideration before the Christmas recess. It is therefore suggested that if the Parliamentary Committee indicates its willingness to intervene, Raja Bahadur will take steps to obtain authority from the Taluqdars for making a formal request to the Parliamentary Sub-Committee. The Government in that case have to be asked to stay its hands while the negotiations are completed. I have explained that the Parliamentary Sub-Committee can agree to move in the matter only if the Ministry indicates its opinion in favour of such step and in any case postponement of further consideration of the Bill will be very difficult. I have suggested that as two of the members of the Sub-Committee and other members of the Working Committee are at Wardha it would be best to see them there. From the talk I have had with them I gather that these friends are keen on a settlement and have always been so. Now that the Rajabahadur has become the President of the Association after a keen contest he may carry his brother Taluqdars with him and it may be worth while giving him a chance. I need hardly say that I personally favour an agreed settlement. I believe Maulanasaheb will be coming to Patna on the 19th December for a meeting of the Hindustani Committee of Bihar. In case it is considered necessary to discuss preliminaries, the Raja Bahadur and other representatives of Taluqdars are ready to meet him there. I may also be in Patna on that day, if I maintain my present progress.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

151. *To Rafi Ahmed Kidwai*

P.O. Ziradei (Saran)

14th December 1938

My dear Rafi Ahmed Saheb,

Raja Bahadur of Tiloi, Babu Kamakhyaadutt Ram and some other friends have seen me here with a proposal that the Parliamentary Sub-Committee should intervene to bring about a settlement of the tenancy question. I have explained to these friends that after the resolution of Taluqdars of 27th October, it is not possible for the Sub-Committee to come in unless there is a clear indication that the Taluqdars want it and that in any case we could come in only if the Ministry expressed its desire to have our intervention. I have written a letter<sup>1</sup> to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad a copy of which I am enclosing for your information. It will give you the substance of my conversation with them as also my opinion regarding the desirability of an agreed solution. I should be obliged if you be good enough to let me have your and the Government's view in the matter. As Maulana Azad is likely to come to Patna on the 19th December it is possible I may meet him there and shall be thankful for a reply before that.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

<sup>1</sup>See Rajendra Prasad's letter dated 14 December 1938 to Vallabhbhai Patel and Abul Kalam Azad.

152. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

Purushottam Building  
Opp. Opera House  
Bombay  
December 17, 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

I got your letter of the 14th December, delivered to me at Wardha. I showed it to Maulana Saheb also. You may discuss the question with him; he is coming to Patna on the 19th. I am afraid, it is too late now to do anything in the matter. Besides, so far as I am concerned, my time is booked up with engagements. But if you and Maulana meet it is advisable to put [an] end to it. You can do so in consultation with and the consent of the U.P. Government. Personally I would prefer to leave the matter to Jawaharlal as he has returned and primarily it is his job. We would unnecessarily come in for blame for anything that we can do now.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

153. *From Rafi Ahmed Kidwai*Lucknow  
17 December 1938

Dear Rajendra Babu,

I am in receipt of your letter re the U.P. Tenancy Bill.

So far as the Government is concerned, the position is as it was when we met at Delhi and although we contend that the Bill we have introduced in the Assembly, and which is under discussion, is based on principles of equity and justice, we are always willing to discuss the provisions that may be objected to with you and other members of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee and be guided by its advice.

But I am afraid the position of the Taluqdars of Oudh and the Zamindars of Agra is not as you take it to be. There are two principal zamindar organisations in the Province—the British Indian Association of Oudh and the Agra Province Zamindars' Association of Allahabad. It is true that some time last year the British Indian Association resolved to appoint a committee to take up necessary steps to safeguard the interests of the Taluqdars in the matter of the proposed tenancy law and appointed Raja Bahadur of Tiloi as its convener; but this resolution can in no way be considered to be effective. In the meeting of the Executive Committee held on October 27 they adopted the enclosed resolution. In this they have clearly rejected your offer made after our discussion at Delhi.

The decision of the Agra Province Zamindars' Association is equally clear. They too in their official resolution passed on November 4 (copy enclosed) have approved of negotiations.

Before the Parliamentary Sub-Committee takes up the matter again, the position of these two organisations must be clarified and unless it is made clear that the discussions that we may enter into would not likely [to] be futile, I would not advise you to agree to intervene.

Yours sincerely,  
R.A. KidwaiBabu Rajendra Prasadji  
Member, All India Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee  
P.O. Ziradei (Saran).*Enclosure 1:*

(Resolutions passed by the Taluqdars of Oudh at their meeting held on the  
27th October 1938 at Kaisarbagh Baradari, Lucknow)

This meeting of the landlords of Oudh is of the opinion that it is desirable that the entire land question including matters relating to land revenue and other matters affecting land, should not be dealt with piecemeal but at one and the same

time, and this meeting would welcome an agreement on the entire question so that landlords and taluqdars may have a complete picture of the future before them.

This meeting of the landlords of Oudh is of the opinion that the problems, upon the proper solution of which the peace and prosperity of the Province depends, can only be achieved by goodwill and mutual agreement and the imposition of any decision arrived at without the concurrence of those vitally affected by it is not likely to establish that healthy atmosphere which is essential for a peaceful solution of the problem.

In case the Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee is willing to settle all outstanding agrarian problems by negotiation and mutual agreement, the landlords of Oudh would be glad to meet them with a view to an immediate and final settlement of the points at issue and will leave no avenue unexplored for the purpose.

*Enclosure 2:*

(Resolutions passed at an extraordinary meeting of the Managing Committee of the Agra Province Zamindars' Association on November 4th, 1938)

Resolved that the Managing Committee of the Agra Province Zamindars' Association is definitely of opinion that further discussions and negotiations with the U.P. Government should take place on matters ranging the whole field of legislation that may be undertaken by the Government and which may vitally affect the interest of the zamindars; and in case fundamental differences on cardinal points reveal themselves, such points may be referred to the Parliamentary Sub-Committee for a final settlement.

Resolved that a Negotiation Sub-Committee consisting of the following gentlemen<sup>1</sup> be authorised to carry on further negotiations with the Government and invite the High Command with a view to come to an early settlement, and take such action as they deem fit in the interest of the landlords and tenants.

<sup>1</sup> Names not given.

154. *From Vallabhbhai Patel*

Camp: Wardha  
December 18, 1938

My dear Rajendrababu,

I got your letter yesterday and I discussed the matter with Maulana and Jawaharlalji. We agree that the number of ministers in Bihar should be increased. The administration of the Province cannot be carried on efficiently [with] the

present number. I do not know whether you had any talk with Sir Sultan again, but if you can settle the Hindu-Muslim question separately in your Province it will be very desirable. About the kisan trouble I had a long talk with Maulana Saheb and you may discuss the matter with him. About Orissa, the question of investigation of the complaints made against the Ministry can be disposed of by Maulana by calling the persons concerned to Calcutta, but about the conference of landlords we feel that it would be better for you to finish it. I hope you will be able to go to Orissa after Christmas, in the first week of January, and dispose of the matter. Please inform Mr. Biswanath Das about it.

Maniben and Mridula have both been sentenced for two months each. They have done very good work.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

Babu Rajendra Prasad  
Post Ziradei (Dist. Saran).

155. *From Jaipal Singh*

6 Mominpore Road  
Kidderpore  
Calcutta  
December 22nd, 1938

Dear Dr. Rajendra Prasad,

I am very glad to read that you have recovered from your recent illness. I was in Patna last week staying with my old Oxford friend Syed Mehdi Imam and I had thought of coming to your home to see you. But I realised that in your convalescence my visit would have been a tax on your health, and much against my intense desire, I gave up the idea of meeting you. While at Patna I saw Dr. Syed Mahmud and also Shreeman Anugrah Narayan Sinha and I shall be most grateful if you would again goad them to do something. It is not enough to make promises. I must be given an opportunity to serve my people. The Adibasis, I am one of them, must be helped. They have been forgotten long enough.

Forgive me for mentioning the hopeless condition of the Chhotanagpuris. Coming back to my home after twenty years I am cut to the quick at their stationary condition. I fully realise the finances of the Province have to face appalling problems outside Chhotanagpur but I cannot help feeling that unless the Adibasis are made to see actual beneficent work they will rebel against all form of authority, which would be a disaster for them no less than for the rest of the Bihar Province. I have been so long in educational work that I almost loathe politics but my mind has been much upset by seeing things in the villages near my



own village. I can no longer remain outside the crying distress of my people.

With all my best wishes and pranams,

Yours sincerely,  
Jaipal Singh

156. *From Jawaharlal Nehru*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Anand Bhawan  
Allahabad  
December 23, 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I forget if I answered your letter of the 4th December. I am afraid this question of employing Jews in India is a very difficult one. I am in favour of real experts being utilised by us, but average men are not so necessary. Besides, the Government of India is putting all manner of difficulties in the way. They want, for instance, a guarantee of permanent employment which no one can give.

We have received large numbers of applications from Jewish refugees, chiefly from engineers and experts. I have sent them to Provincial Governments in case they can utilise the services of any of them.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

Shri Rajendra Prasad  
Sadaquat Ashram  
Patna.

157. *From J.B. Kripalani*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE  
Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad

Camp: Fyzabad  
28 December 1938

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I sent from Wardha the draft resolution on the Bihari-Bengali question as adopted by the Working Committee. The resolution is subject to your approval. The Committee wants you to incorporate whatever is not in your report and is

contemplated in the resolution. As you are coming to the next meeting you will please come ready with this. In the meantime if you do not mind I would like to know your views about the additions suggested. Jawaharlalji would also like to know what you think of those additions. I hope you are doing well now.

With pranams,

Yours sincerely,  
J.B. Kripalani

Shri Rajendra Prasad  
Ziradei  
Distt. Saran.

158. *To J.B. Kripalani (Allahabad)*

P.O. Ziradei (Saran)  
31st December 1938

My dear Kripalaniji,

I received your letter together with the draft resolution on the Bengali-Bihari question. I considered the matter and it does not seem to me that there is any very fundamental change suggested. I have been finding some difficulty, however, in [dovetailing] the suggestions in the Report as it stands without making somewhat extensive changes in two or three paragraphs. I would keep this ready for the next meeting of the Working Committee. There is, however, one point which may create difficulty. In preparing my Report I did not have only Bihar in my view but also some other Provinces. I see no objection to birth being treated as sufficient for employment. But the suggestion regarding trade and business present greater difficulty. In Bihar we have the coalmines which supply more than two-thirds of the total production of the country. We have the sugar mills which produce more than one-third of the total production of the country. In mica and steel the Province has practically a monopoly. If you paid a visit to these industrial places you will find large numbers employed in the lowest paid grades as unskilled labourers in many of these places but hardly any native of the Province in any of the higher paid grades. This naturally creates discontent. People suited for jobs in these higher paid grades are just the people who are [local]. The Bihar Government did nothing beyond writing to these firms to give employment to local people also. The Government of Orissa has gone much further. It has made it a condition of a Licence granted for a paper factory that not less than 75% (I am not sure about the figure but it is some such thing if not higher) of both the skilled and unskilled workers as also employees in the higher grades should be Oriyas. In C.P. they have gone further still and have prohibited contracts from being given by either the Government or the local bodies to anybody who was not domiciled in the Province before 1912. In making my recommendation I adopted a course

which appeared to me to be the middle course. It provided for encouragement being given by firms and factories to natives of the Province and at the same time avoided any undue influence being used. The suggestion of the Working Committee deprives the Provincial Governments even of the right of recommending in [a] general way provincials for appointments. I would suggest that this should not be done without giving an opportunity to other Provinces also to represent their viewpoints. But as the matter has remained pending so long I would not like any further delay. The decision must be taken and published by the Working Committee at its next meeting.

By the by, have you seen two telegrams published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*—the one from Patna and the other from Bombay? They give more or less accurate description of the Working Committee draft and they could not have emanated from anyone who had not seen the draft or known the details of the discussions. I am enclosing one of the cuttings from the *Patrika* which you will please preserve for reference. I would propose to raise the question at the next meeting of the Working Committee.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

Enclosure not included.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### PART II

1. From S.M. Dhar to Prafulla Chandra Ghosh

7th January 1938

Dear Dr. Ghosh,

I am directed by the Hon'ble Dr. Saiyid Mahmud, Minister of Education and Development Department, Bihar, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th October 1937 with which you had kindly drawn up and forwarded a scheme for the development of village industries in this Province. In your scheme you have suggested development of the following village industries:

1. Manufacture of gur from palmyra and date palm juice;
2. Bee-keeping;
3. Hand paper making;
4. Oil milling by the introduction of improved ghanny; and
5. Manufacture of soap from *saji mati* and mahua oil.

2. As regards (1) manufacture of gur from palmyra and date palm juice, the Hon'ble Dr. Mahmud feels dubious of the utility of developing this industry in Bihar where we are already faced with the problem of ensuring a fair price and marketing of sugar and gur produced on a large scale most of which is exported outside. To produce more gur from palmyra and date palm will only aggravate the situation unless there is a ready market for such gur or the production of such gur can be proved to be more economical so that it gradually replaces the cane gur by the natural operation of economic laws. As a matter of fact, the Department of Agriculture here has already got more trained in palmyra gur making. That department started demonstration of palmyra gur making in 1933-34, when the price of gur was much higher. Afterwards, as a result of the earthquake, and subsequent glut in the gur market, this work was discontinued. The data available in the Agricultural Department show that palmyra gur is more expensive than cane gur. We shall, therefore, be extremely obliged if you kindly send us further particulars of the economics, including detailed costing under village conditions, of gur making from palmyra and date palm, so that we may be able to compare it with that of cane gur before proceeding further with the scheme.

3. As regards (2) bee-keeping, the Director of Agriculture has already arranged for the training of four agricultural overseers in this industry in Mysore State under the Entomologist there and these men are likely to be sent for training in April next. The Director of Agriculture is, however, being requested that these overseers on their way to Mysore or on their way back may also spend some time in Mr. Gopabandhu Chaudhury's apiary at Bori-Cuttack to get experience in bee-keeping in the plains of Orissa where the conditions are

expected to be similar to [those of] Bihar.

4. As regards (3) hand paper industry, the Department of Industries here has been collecting materials from Mr. Munnalal Khaddri of Kalpi, U.P., and the Hyderabad State of the economics of hand paper making. The figures furnished by them show that the men employed in paper making can earn 2½ annas to 4 annas per day at the most and the paper made is much more expensive than machine-made paper. The costing given by Mr. Khaddri is enclosed for your information. Would you be so good as to let me know if you agree with these figures which are not very encouraging. On receipt of your reply we shall take up the question of sending two intelligent young men to Wardha for training in hand paper industry.

5. As regards (4) improved ghanny, the Department of Industries is taking steps to send two selected *telis* for training in Wardha who on their return may be employed as demonstrators, if the new method is found to be more remunerative.

6. As regards (5) manufacture of soap from *saji mati* and mahua oil, I am directed to point out that the Government of Bihar are already considering a scheme for enlarging the Industrial Chemistry section attached to the Patna Science College which provides for a Research Chemist and expansion of the soap making section. This section when started will be able to deal with the question very thoroughly including analysis of our local oils.

7. Expecting the favour of an early reply.

Yours sincerely,  
S.M. Dhar

Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh  
Calcutta.

Enclosure not included.

## 2. From Prafulla Chandra Ghosh to S.M. Dhar

ALL INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION  
(BENGAL)

249-D Bowbazar Street  
Calcutta  
6th March 1938

Dear Mr. Dhar,

I received your letter of the 15th February after my return from Haripura Congress. I wanted to reply to your letter immediately but my illness caused the delay in replying to yours. I am glad to learn from your letter that my assumptions are incorrect. How could I know that my letter of the 5th October was mislaid somehow and you could get it only in the middle of December.

As regards production of gur from palmyra and date palm trees, I have no

doubt a tapper family can earn Rs. 15 to 30 per month by preparation of gur. As a result of the prohibition scheme [a] good many tappers will be thrown out of employment and if they are occupied in this way it will solve unemployment among Pasis. Independent of this, about the production of gur from sugarcane and palmyra juice I can do no better than quote Mr. Kumarappa: "With reference to gur making, I pointed out that the present system is lopsided w. en we have to intensely cultivate sugarcane on good wheat-growing lands while thousands of palmyra trees which need no attention and which can well supply better food articles are allowed to run waste. It is a most uneconomic use of lands and it is supported by Government merely because of powerful vested interests. In doing this, Government shuts its eyes wilfully on the things that are of vital interest to the poor. Just as a few years ago, Government shifted from wheat and food crops to sugarcane; it should now be prepared to shift back to food crops and undo the terrible mischief it has done to the voiceless people."

As regards hand-made paper our experience is that taking all the items into consideration a man can at present earn [annas] 4-5 per day. I do not know Mr. Bhagwandas of Kalpi well, so I am not in a position to say anything about introducing a hand-paper making section at the cottage industries institute with his help.

With thanks,

Yours sincerely,  
Prafulla Ch. Ghosh

3. *From Chittajallur Venkatachalapati and Kasiraji Yogananda Lakshmi Narasimha Rau to Subhas Chandra Bose, President, All India Congress Working Committee (Camp: Bombay)*

6 May 1938

Dear Sir,

It is a well known fact that at the trumpet call of Mahatmaji during non-cooperation movement of 1921 and civil disobedience movement of 1930, people from all walks and stations in life gathered round his banner actuated by a spirit of self-sacrifice to do their bit of service to their Motherland. From Andhradesa, village officers and other Government servants took part in those two movements and as a result they have lost their jobs either by voluntary resignation or by removal by the Government. At the time of Gandhi-Irwin Pact it was also one of the conditions between Government and Mahatma Gandhi that the case of those Government servants who lost their appointments will be considered favourably and they will be reinstated and justice done to them.

Now [that] the Congress has accepted ministries in majority of provinces is it not incumbent on them to respect the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and do justice to this class of sufferers—those who lost their jobs during non-

cooperation movement and civil disobedience movement? With due regard to the Congressmen in position, they have called for a list of persons who lost their jobs, during the movements. As a result people from all parts in Andhradesa have sent in their applications to Madras Government through their respective District and Provincial Committees and through local M.L.A.s also. The Government have taken up the case of [a] particular class of these sufferers, namely, village officers whose number happened to be an appreciable figure. But it is a pity that the case of us—public servants—poor sufferers who happened to be stray persons scattered all over the country, one here and one there, from various departments, was not such as to appeal to persons in power—fellow Congressmen and sufferers as they are not so seriously thought of and redress given.

1. In the case of Mr. T. Anantha Padmanabhayya, Sub-Inspector of Police, Nellore district, who resigned during non-cooperation movement, orders were received from the Madras Congress Government, rejecting his application for grant of compassionate allowance.

2. Mr. G.V.S. Ramachandra Rao of Godavari district who worked for 7 years in Public Works Department and who resigned his appointment in non-cooperation movement, on an application to the Premier for restoration [of] his grade and service, is now called to state whether he would be willing to accept a Lower Division Clerk's post on the minimum salary.

3. It is an utter disappointment to receive from the Honourable C. Rajagopalachari, the Madras Congress Premier, the following communication on applications by Ch. V. Chalapati of Kistna district and K.Y.L. Narasimha Rau of Guntur district for restoration who resigned their Government jobs in 1922 and 1921 respectively. The communication runs thus:

#### GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Madras  
April 28th, 1938

Dear Sir,

There is no vacancy to which, as far as I am aware, you can be employed. Your age is the bar and not politics. There is no bar to your being entertained in any service on the ground of your participation in politics. No fresh order is necessary to cancel the ineligibility order passed on 21-2-1932.

Yours sincerely,  
C. Rajagopalachari

Shri Chittajallur Venkatachalapati  
Shri K.Y.L. Narasimha Rau, Guntur.

The communication says that the age of us is the bar and not politics. We are now about 37 and 38 years old respectively. Age cannot be bar for those who entered Government service long ago before we attained 25 years of age. If we had continued without disturbance, we could have put in 16 years' more service by this time. It is not for our selfish individual purpose that we came out of



Government service but for a sacred and noble cause—the service of the country. Hence the question of age bar for employment into Government service shall not arise at all or stand in our way of re-employment and the rules for employment of fresh recruits shall not apply in our case. Our re-employment is only in accordance with the Gandhi-Irwin Pact policy pursued in all other Congress Provinces and in this Province also towards sufferers—village officers, Pressmen who lost securities, ryots who lost their lands in no-tax campaign.

“There is no vacancy, as far as I am aware, [to which] you can be employed”, says the communication. We are not able to understand what it means with its huge machinery of thousands of Government servants working, retiring and being entertained afresh. Can there not be scope for our being employed in any of the new vacancies arising out of old people going on pension etc., or in newly created posts? But the Premier in his reply to interpellations in January Assembly session stated that each case of reinstatement applied for is considered on its merits. But it is a pity that it is not observed in practice. This is no personal obligation. The Congress Government, as a policy, should restore all irrespectively whether or not they apply for the same with due regard to Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Moreover the Chief Parliamentary Secretary in his Nellore speech recently, on 15-4-38, quite contrary to Premier’s statement, stated definitely that, except in the case of village officers the Government had decided not to consider to reinstate the public servants. If this is the attitude of the Congress Ministry of Madras Province and if the Congress High Command also now agrees with the said attitude, we fear we have no solution till doomsday. It is not for our humble selves to represent that the prestige of the Congress and the Congress Ministries will considerably be enhanced by such acts of mercy and the soldiers in their fight for the country’s cause will be strengthened in their conviction that there will be no victimisation of such of those who partake in freedom fight if and when [a] favourable opportunity arises.

We understand that along with the All India Congress Working Committee which is going to meet at Bombay on the 15th instant, the Hon’ble Premiers of several Provinces will also be summoned for discussing various matters. We, therefore, humbly request that you will be so good as to place this important all-India question before the Working Committee as well as the Premiers’ Conference for such favourable consideration and bring due influence especially on Madras Government and relieve us, poor sufferers in the cause of the country.

We beg to remain, Dear Sir,  
Your most obedient servants,

1. Chittajallur Venkatachalapati (Rev. Clerk, resigned in 1922—Kistna Dist.)
2. Kasiraji Yogananda Lakshmi Narasimha Rau (Rev. Clerk, resigned in 1921—Guntur Dist.)

Copy to Babu Rajendra Prasad, Member of the Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee and member of the A.I.C.W.C., Camp Bombay.

4. *From Abdul Bari to Binodanand Jha*

(Local)

28.5.38

My dear Binoda Babu,

The bearer is my relation and was a Congress candidate in Darbhanga for Municipal election, but has not returned. As you were absent I could not tell personally about him but you will please hear him and note down his name for nomination. I am going to Jamshedpur this evening, I will tell you when I come back.

Yours sincerely,  
Abdul Bari

5. *From Dharnidhar to Anugrah Narayan Sinha*

Laheriasarai  
25 June 1938

My dear Anugrah Babu,

As I devoted my time to the Municipal elections in the town on behalf of the Congress, I am interested in the matter of the selection of the nominated members: hence this note to you.

I am, therefore, suggesting to you the following names with my reasons and recommend them to your acceptance with all the earnestness that I can command with you.

- (i) B. Baroda Charan
- (ii) B. Lachhmi Rout
- (iii) B. Thako Das (Dusadh)
- (iv) B. Raghunandan Pd.
- (v) Pandit Sirdhar Misra

I have discharged my duty by putting you in possession of the facts from the point of view of the local Congress and have no doubt you will discharge your duty by giving full consideration to everything.

Yours sincerely,  
Dharnidhar

6. *From Gopichand Bhargava to Abul Kalam Azad*

8 Royal Hotel, Nabha Estate  
Simla  
16th July 1938

My dear Maulana Sahib,

I had received your letter and I got your telegram today. I have sent a telegram in reply:

YOUR TELEGRAM STOP SO FAR PARTY HAD DECIDED REMAIN NEUTRAL ALL BILLS TODAY VOTING FOR LAND ALIENATION STOP SHALL DECIDE ABOUT RESTITUTION MONDAY STOP LAND ALIENATION MEANS EXPROPRIATION WITHOUT COMPENSATION STOP I GOT CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION STOP PRAY PERMIT RESIGNING SEAT STOP DETAILED LETTER FOLLOWS

I had tried to make the position clear in my letter to you.

I feel that though the Bills outwardly seem to be giving relief to the poor agriculturist yet in reality they help the rich. The land conditions here are not like tenants of Bengal or U.P. or Bihar. Moreover, there is that distinctive Land Alienation Act. A tiller of the soil is deprived of right of buying land simply because he is born in a special tribe. Whether a tribe is an agricultural one is now left to the Deputy Commissioner to decide. We said that the Court should decide as they did before; if that was not agreed to, we suggested that the Deputy Commissioner should act and follow the procedure of a Court. The Government did not agree.

Let me take the Acts individually.

*Land Alienation (Amendment) Bill.* A part of it I have described above. We have been crying always and that rightly that the Executive should not be armed with powers and those arbitrary ones. We should make the judicial stronger, but by agreeing to this Bill we have strengthened their hands.

Second point is of *Benamis*. A *Benami* means that a member of an agricultural tribe sells his land to another member of agricultural tribe but the beneficiary is a non-agriculturist. The second agriculturist is only a proprietor in name. The money is advanced by the non-agriculturist. Now the agriculturist who sold the land shall get it back without paying the money taken by him. My objection is that granting that the transaction was a fraud, the money was paid. This money should be treated like other debts. I can understand that the interest and capital be reduced and if it is found that after reduction and after deducting what has been paid, there still remains a balance, it should be paid. Government does not agree. How can I support such a Bill? I do not oppose it but I cannot support it either. The Party has decided to remain non-voting. Now they want to vote for the Bill. They are going into some lobby with Government, and thus show to the masses that they are the protectors of rights of the masses. I am in agreement that relief is to be given to the poor but I do not support such expropriation. That is why I sent you a telegram. Those who believe in this should be permitted to run the Party and work [in] the Assembly. I am sorry I cannot.

Second is the *Registration of Moneylenders*. I am for the Bill but there is some difference about details. The Government imposes double punishment and that is out of all proportions to the crime. Here also the power is given either to Deputy Commissioner or to the Government. It is bound to be used for political purposes. Moreover, the money shall be dearer for the agriculturists. It shall give no relief to poor people.

Third is *Restitution of Mortgaged Lands*. The Government has changed it a bit—I had a mind to hold a Party meeting on Monday and decide about voting. I

shall place your telegram before the meeting. How much so ever I may like the action of the Government, but my mind revolts to go into lobby with them. I enhance their prestige and prolong their life—we are trying to smash this Cabinet and bring about Sind conditions here. But how can it be done when I am required to vote with them? The Congress is a progressive Party and now when [it] agrees and votes with the Government, it ceases to claim progressiveness.

Your orders are being obeyed and shall be obeyed but I must submit that Congress has committed suicide.

I also feel that I am not strong enough to lead or follow Party mandates and therefore crave your indulgence and request you to permit me to resign the seat and revert to my old work.

Please wire your instructions and permission as to reach me on Monday or Tuesday.

Yours sincerely,  
Gopichand Bhargava

Copy forwarded to Mahatma Gandhiji, Sardar Patel, and Babu Rajendra Prasadji for their information and guidance.

#### 7. From Jawaharlal Nehru to J.B. Kripalani

Budapest  
30 August 1938

My dear Jivat,

I have stayed on so long here owing to Indira's illness. She is much better now and we are therefore going to London by air on September 1st. Vijayalakshmi is accompanying us.

Europe is a volcano on the point of bursting. I have thought repeatedly of sending you long notes for the Working Committee dealing with the European crisis as well as the minority question in Czechoslovakia. The latter is of course the merest pretext for the crisis which is solely due to Hitler's determination to dominate Europe by crushing Czechoslovakia and thus reaching Rumania with her oilfields and wheat. Nevertheless the minority question is full of interest and warning for us and we might learn something from it. But I have been unable to write in spite of several attempts. Partly this has been due to lack of time owing to Indira's illness. But largely owing to the mass of material in my head which I cannot easily compress into a note.

But the crisis grows and the volcano might burst at any moment. September is the critical month and mid-September the worst time. If September passes without war, there will in all likelihood be no war, at any rate till next spring. The decision rests with Hitler and Hitler alone. Nobody else is going to start a war.

I hope you have heard from him on this subject. Now that the Tenancy Bills have been passed by the Legislature the occasion for issuing the statement has arisen. The tenants have now to be told both by the Government and the Congress through their respective agencies that they must pay up their just dues without delay and the provisions of the Tenancy Bills have to be clearly explained to them. I find that interested persons have led them to believe that the longer they will defer the payment of rent the greater will be the concessions. It has therefore become necessary that those who can speak with authority should clear up the atmosphere. At present the landlords are not able to collect their rent and their financial position is far from satisfactory.

I trust you will give the matter your immediate attention and take adequate steps to help the landlords to get their dues from the tenants.

. Hoping to hear from you as [to] what steps you are going to take in the matter and with kind regards,

I remain,  
Yours sincerely,  
K. Singh

Enclosure not included.

9. *From the General Secretary, All India Congress Committee, to Allahbaksh, Premier, Sind*

Wardha  
5.9.38

PARLIAMENTARY SUB COMMITTEE IN CONSULTATION PRESIDENT CONGRESS  
CONSIDERED SIND SITUATION STOP IT HOLDS THAT UNLESS MINISTRY AGREES  
POSTPONEMENT ENTIRE ASSESSMENT PROPOSALS INCLUDING REGROUPING FOR  
ONE YEAR CONGRESS PARTY WILL RESUME FREEDOM OF ACTION AND WILL  
REMAIN NEUTRAL ON NO CONFIDENCE MOTION NEXT SESSION

10. *From Ram Dass to Abul Kalam Azad, Member, Parliamentary Sub-Committee (Wardha)*

Ramghat, Hajipur  
6th September 1938

Dear Sir,

The memorial submitted to Syt. Dr. Rajendra Prasad Saheb speaks [for] itself. The appointment of his son-in-law Babu Bipin Behari Verma is only going to

humiliate the Congress flag. I request that you will kindly advise Dr. Rajendra Prasad Saheb to make suggestion for the appointment of some Congressman, if he likes, but he should not be his relation and inhabitant of Champaran.

Yours obediently,  
Ram Dass

11. *From Abul Kalam Azad to Ranjit Pandit*

6 September 1938

RANJIT PANDIT  
CONGRESS  
LUCKNOW

YOUR TELEGRAM JUST RECEIVED TELEPHONE NUMBER 26 IF NECESSARY

ABULKALAM

12. *From Mahesh Prasad Sinha, Chairman, District Board, Muzaffarpur, to the Parliamentary Secretary in charge of Local Self-Government Department, Patna*

Muzaffarpur  
9th September 1938

Sir,

With reference to your D.O. letter No. Nil dated the 15th August 1938 forwarding a copy of letter dated the 2nd July 1938 from Thakur Ram Nandan Singh, M.L.A., to the address of the Hon'ble Minister, in charge of Local Self-Government, on the subject of showing favouritism to [a] certain contractor working in this District Board, I have the honour to state that it would have been far better if Thakur Ram Nandan Singh, M.L.A., before writing to Government should have thought it necessary to write to the District Board Office in his capacity as a member of this Board in order to be fully acquainted with the fact before taking up correspondence with Government. I am sure, in that case it would not have been necessary for him to trouble Government with the long letter that he has written. I find that in his letter he has quoted certain number and date of official letters issued from the office of the Superintending Engineer, North Bihar Circle, and also from the office of the District Engineer. I do not know how he came in possession of these documents and whether he was justified in making use of the same before actually getting them authenticated by a reference to the undersigned.

Now coming to the points raised in his letter I have to state that the project of stone-metalling a portion of the Sitamarhi road from miles 1 to 6 and 34 to 37 was *conceived by my predecessor in office Syt. Chandreshwar Prasad Narayan Sinha, M.A., M.L.A., C.I.E.* He started correspondence on the subject with the Government in the year 1935 and after a good deal of efforts, both with the officers of the Government as well as in the Road Board, where he had been a member, was successful to get a grant of Rs. 1,34,400 to take up the work. He was very anxious to see the project taken up as quickly as possible in order that the road running from Muzaffarpur to Sitamarhi be put in order throughout as a portion of the cost of the project was to be met from the amount available to the Board out of the Earthquake grant for restoration of the Sitamarhi road.

Shortly after the above project was finally included in the 6-year programme of the Road Board by the Special Officer deputed by Government for the purpose, he wrote a letter to the Secretary to the Government vide D.O. No. 11860 dated 22-1-37 enquiring regarding the state in which the project in question was lying then and learnt from him in reply vide his D.O. No. 16240 dated the 10th February 1937 that the project was already included in [the] 6-year programme and there was a fair certainty of the same being accepted by Government. *On receipt of this letter he made arrangements for collection of materials and selected two contractors, one for the first 6 miles of the road and the other for the remaining 3 miles from miles 34 to 37. Babu Sheoshankar Singh was selected for the first portion and Babu Premchand for the second portion.* But subsequently on receipt of letter No. 14C dated the 3rd June 1937 from the Chief Engineer (copy enclosed) to the effect that collection of materials should not be taken up until the project was actually sanctioned by Government, *he had to cancel the contract for collection of metal and leave the work pending until such time when Government sanctioned the project and allotted necessary funds. He, however, allowed Babu Sheoshankar Singh to go on with the collection of bricks required for soling and edging for the first 6 miles of the road because that was necessary in view of the fact that District Board bricks of good quality were available in the locality. I did not give the work of stone-metalling the [first] 6 miles of the road to Babu Sheoshankar Singh and thereby showed any partiality to him.* The work was already allotted to him *by my predecessor* in the usual course of business, taking into consideration the ability of the contractor to do the work required of him. *I engaged him only for the last 3 miles of the road, the contract of Babu Premchand for which was cancelled by my predecessor.*

As regards the rate for supply of stone ballast allowed to Babu Sheoshankar Singh I have to state that in arriving at the cost of supply of stone ballast to any place, we have to take into account the cost of stone metal at the quarry siding plus the railway freight to be paid for carriage of the same from the quarry to the site of delivery and the loading and unloading charges. So far as supply of stone ballast to Muzaffarpur is concerned I find that the same is transported from Pakur, a place situated in Bhagalpur district. Besides the cost of metal itself, the railway freight to be paid by the contractor is taken into account and according to

the information received in the office of the District Engineer from the Station Master, Muzaffarpur railway station, the Traffic Manager, Gorakhpur, and the Chief Commercial Manager, Calcutta, the same for through booking comes to annas -/4/10 per maund. Copy of the letters received in this connection are enclosed herewith for reference. Working on this basis we find that in order to transport 100 c ft of stone ballast from Pakur to Muzaffarpur *a contractor had to pay a sum of Rs.33/3/8 as railway freight* and if we add to this the cost of stone metal at Pakur siding as *Rs.10 per 100 c ft the total cost comes to Rs. 43/3/8 per 100 c ft*. It has been mentioned in the letter to *Thakur Ram Nandan Singh* that the rate for *local booking comes to annas -/3/8 per maund*. I do not understand what he means by local booking. Probably he means booking of the stone metal separately over the lines of the two Railway Companies which fall in the way. If this be so I fail to understand *why he has not taken into account the loading, unloading and re-booking charges* which one has to meet in re-booking the consignment at the junction railway station.

I am not a technical expert and am not supposed to look into all these things. But on looking into the *estimate prepared in the office of the District Engineer and also the same having been examined and passed by the Superintending Engineer*, I find that the rate for supply of stone ballast at Muzaffarpur has been provided in the estimate at Rs.43/14/- per 100 c ft and the same at Sitamarhi on account of the increase in the distance by rail to Rs.47/15/- per 100 c ft. The technical experts, I mean *the District Engineer and the Superintending Engineer*, I suppose, were *thoroughly satisfied with regard to the rate before they passed on the estimates from their office as duly checked*. In view of this fact I do not think that the rate allowed to Babu Sheoshankar Sinha, Contractor, *namely Rs.41 per 100 c ft for Muzaffarpur and Rs.45 per 100 c ft for Sitamarhi is in any way exorbitant and can be said to be detrimental to the interest of the Board*.

Now coming to the question *why the quotation of Babu Premchand of Rs.35 per 100 c ft was not given credence*, I have to point out that the dealings of this contractor with the Board for the last few years that he has been working as a contractor here has been *highly suspicious*. This man has been in the habit of quoting very low rate in the beginning and manoeuvring matters in such a way that the high officials may not know it till it is too late, [and] has been getting the *amount of his bills increased beyond all proportions*. On the Sitamarhi road where most of his works were done he managed affairs in his unscrupulous way in such a manner that he got the *rate for carriage of materials increased several times* with the result that the District Board would have been put to a great loss on his account if it would not have been detected in time. His final bills are still under scrutiny of the District Engineer and Inspector of Local Works. *The D.E. has finished checking of his bills to the extent of Rs.35,823 only and out of that, I am told, he has found items of work worth Rs.24,450 as superfluous and passed it only for Rs.11,373*. It is a difficult task for me to detail the various actions through which this contractor has tried to cheat the District Board by doing works which are not of approved standard and also by charging rates which were



*never mentioned or even thought of at the time the works were let out to him. Things came up to such a pass at a time that Government were constrained to ask for an explanation from the District Board vide their letter No. 130 L.S.G. dated 8.1.38 addressed to the Commissioner, Tirhut Division, and the District Board had to justify its action with regard to the work done by this man. Knowing as I did the previous antecedents of this contractor it was simply impossible to place any reliance on the rate quoted by him. But in view of the facts and figures placed before me, duly verified and examined by the District Engineer and the Inspector of Local Works, and being anxious to see that the incomplete works of the Sitamarhi road were taken up and finished in a workmanlike manner as early as possible, I accepted the rate of Babu Sheoshankar Singh at Rs.41 and Rs.45/1 respectively for the [first] six and the last 3 miles of the road.*

As regards the allegations made by Thakur Ram Nandan Singh, M.L.A., that irregular payments have been made to Babu Sheoshankar Singh on account of bricks manufactured by him on the Reghai Road, I have to state that the allegations made are based on ignorance of the true fact of the case. In order to make the point clear I have to state in a little detail the circumstances which led to the manufacture of bricks on the Reghai Road By Babu Sheoshankar Singh. The Government of Bihar and Orissa in their letter No. 5195-97 R.D. dated the 29th November 1934, appointed a *Sub-Committee consisting of Rai Bahadur K.C. Sen, Inspector of Local Works, Mr. P.C. Basu, Special Embankment Engineer, and Col. F.C. Temple, Relief Engineer and Supply Officer to investigate the problem of reconstructing the Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi road and also to give their suggestion regarding its reconstruction in such a way as to make it passable throughout the year, in view of the changes effected in the topography of the country after the Earthquake.* This Sub-Committee met on several days and made recommendations to Government in due course. I find that among the recommendations made by this Committee the following remarks were made so far [as] the Bowal Bazar Road and the roads in its neighbourhood were concerned.

Though it is outside the scope of our terms of reference we wish to emphasise that there is a great danger of the Bagmati breaking over the dividing line between its channel into the channel of Bur-Gandak between Minapur and Japaha. It appears to me that it will not be a serious interference with natural tendencies to maintain the dividing line between these rivers and we recommend that this be done by raising the Minapur road from Japaha to Majorganj road as a solid bund pierced only by drainage outlets where necessary, controlled by sluices, and metalled throughout, as metalled roads alone are maintained at the correct level; that the Majorganj road from the junction of Minapur road up to junction of the Reghai road should be raised and metalled in a similar way and that the Reghai road should be raised also in a similar way from Majorganj road to the neighbourhood of Sewaipatty. The Majorganj road from Reghai to

Tajpur should in our opinion be restored as early as possible as a ground level road possibly protected with pucca causeways but with the lengths in the lower lands raised up to the high flood level with the bridges restored as before.

The Government of Bihar in their letter No. 2764 L.S.G. dated the 25th March 1935 considered the above recommendations of the Sub-Committee appointed by it and made the following remarks with regard to the proposals raising the Minapur road.

*Government also accept the Committee's recommendation that the road from Japaha to Minapur should be raised above high flood level in order to prevent the Bagmati river from breaking over the dividing line between its present channel and the channel of the Bur-Gandak. This action has been rendered necessary by the Earthquake. It will also be necessary to extend this protective work sufficiently far beyond Minapur in the direction of Tetaria to ensure that it is not outflanked by the Bagmati river. A further survey should be made of the country west of Minapur to decide the best line for the above extension, and whether it can best follow the line of existing roads or should take the form of an embankment pure and simple. The recommendation of the Committee that the Japaha-Minapur road should, after being raised in the aforesaid manner, be metalled throughout cannot be accepted, as it would involve additional expenditure which has not been rendered absolutely necessary by the Earthquake. It is, however, desirable that District Board should consider later on whether they are in a position to carry out this desirable improvement at their own expense.*

As desired by Government [a] survey of the country lying west of Minapur was made by the Embankment Engineer and he sent in a plan showing the road to be raised from the junction of the Sitamarhi road at Japaha to the district boundary in the Champaran district. This was with a view to check the flow of the Bagmati river southward and prevent its waters mingling with those of the Bur-Gandak river. *The District Board was anxious to give effect to the recommendations of the Government as much as possible just to avoid the possible contingency of the Bagmati river mixing with the waters of the river Bur-Gandak and thereby damaging the town of Muzaffarpur itself and with a view to give effect to it ordered necessary bricks to be manufactured in a suitable place in the locality by Babu Sheoshankar Singh. This arrangement was made by the ex-Chairman when I was not in office.* He was very keen to do all that was possible for him to give effect to the recommendation of the Sub-Committee appointed by Government. Babu Sheoshankar Singh, therefore, started a Bull's Kiln in mile 3 of the Reghai road and worked it during the full working season of 1936-37 but, as ill luck would have it, Government subsequently in their Resolution No. 655-F dated the 22nd January 1937 decided that they were not going to pay the full

amount arrived at according to the estimated figures to restore the damages done to the properties of the local bodies by the Earthquake and allowed only a lump sum provision of a certain sum as a block grant to make good the same. The District Board of Muzaffarpur was very much hit by this action in as much as the total amount as estimated by the District Board according to the revised estimate prepared for rectifying the damages done to its properties came in the neighbourhood of Rs.60,000 against which the amount allowed by Government in their Resolution No. 656-F dated the 22nd January 1937 came up to Rs.48.68 lacs only. The District Board therefore had to revise its programme of reconstruction inasmuch as according to this revised figure allowed by Government a large amount had to be spent from the District Fund for such works which could not be completed within the Earthquake grant. The bricks, therefore, manufactured at Reghai and originally meant for being used partly on account of the E.Q. grant and partly on account of the District Board Fund became surplus as a number of projects on the Bowal Bazar road and in its neighbourhood had to be given up. *It, therefore, became a problem for the ex-Chairman how to utilise the bricks lying there and manufactured by the arrangement arrived at with the contractor.* The only alternative left was to utilise them on the nearest works in progress on the District Board road which was the Sitamarhi road. The question of stone-metalling a portion of this road from [first] to 6th miles and 24th to 27th miles, as stated above, had been in correspondence with the Government for long and it was certain that bricks would be required for soling and edging in this portion. *The then Chairman, District Board, therefore, on the recommendation of the District Engineer ordered a number of bricks from the Reghai road to be utilised on the Sitamarhi road* after payment of extra cartage involved in the same. It is on this account that the payment of bricks carted from the Reghai road to the Sitamarhi road was made by the District Board to Babu Sheoshankar Singh. There has been *no case of showing any partiality to Babu Sheoshankar Singh*, rather, the materials which became surplus after changing the policy by the Government, followed so far, by way of fixing a lump sum grant for rectification of the entire damages done to the properties of the District Board, have been utilised by the above arrangement. If it had not been done a large quantity of bricks would have become surplus on the Reghai road with no prospect of being utilised in [the] near future. I think this fact is not known to Thakur Ram Nandan Singh. Had it been known to him he could not have accused me of showing favouritism to Babu Sheoshankar Singh. *The fact is that the bricks were manufactured by Babu Sheoshankar Singh under order of the then Chairman, Sjt. Babu Chandreshwar Prasad Narayan Sinha* and it was on receipt of fresh revised orders of the damages done to District Board properties that a portion of these bricks were transferred to the Sitamarhi road. In getting this done *the ex-Chairman had no motive other than that of utilising the materials of the District Board, manufactured in good faith, for works considered necessary at a time but*

abandoned subsequently according to the changed policy of the Government.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
(Sd.)  
Chairman

Enclosures not included.

13. *From Urmila to Mahatma Gandhi*

178 Rashbehari Avenue  
Kalighat  
Calcutta  
10 September 1938

Revered Bapu,

I am writing to you after a very long interval. I do not want to disturb you in your present state of health and my fingers are seldom well enough to hold a pen. I am resigned now and am thankful for the little respite I get between severe attacks.

Some of the released detenus, whose families have settled in Bihar for a long time, came to see me the other day. From what I heard from them about the Bengali-Bihari situation, I think the matter is much more serious than the public realise. I have had one or two sleepless nights over it. And now I am carrying my woes to you as I always do. Bapu, please forgive me when I say you should examine the question yourself. I did not know how serious the situation was till I met these boys. The ideal of nationalism for which the Congress stands is at stake. I am giving you one or two instances which will tell you. The Sone Valley Portland Cement Co. Ltd. has passed orders dispensing with the services of all Bengalees who have not yet been made permanent on the ground that Mr. Harvey, the Manager, has given such an undertaking to the ministers. (2) The Premier of Bihar has gone to Kodarma and has actually requested a very big Indian firm there to dismiss all their Bengalee employees. The firm has done so. The name of the firm is: Chattumal Horilram. These boys mention other things also which are very distressing. If this policy is pursued [in] the staunchest of all Congress Provinces in India, what will happen to the rest of it? How shall we hold up our heads before the world if a Congress Ministry is capable of such petty provincialism? And after a time will not the structure of nationalism which the

Congress has built up crumble to the ground?

Bapu, you know me and you know that I am not upset because I am a Bengalee. If I have been presumptuous in writing this letter, please forgive me, but do give it a thought.

Now that I am [a] little better and Dhiren is free, he will go to see you either at Wardha or at Delhi. He has not had a day's respite since his release. He has been nursing me devotedly all the time. If you decide not to go to Delhi please send us a wire.

With love and pronams to you and Ba,

Yours affectionately,  
Urmila

14. *From Satanjit Jha, President, Kakrour Gram Congress Committee, to Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga*

Kakrour  
17 October 1938

Your Highness,

Your attention is drawn to the following for your Highness' kind consideration and favourable orders.

Most obediently yours,  
President

#### PERILS OF THE KISANS

The Kakrour Gram Congress Committee called a public meeting on the 15th October 1938 at 3 p.m. in the local Durgasthan under the presidentship of Pandit Gunanand Jha. The weather being a bit unfavourable due to rain, only about one thousand persons of the locality could attend it.

After the welcome song, Pt. Rama Nandan Mishra Jee, Pt. Surya Narayan Jha, Babu Surya Narayan Sinha, and Babu Rama Saroup Lal Jee, arrested the attention of the audience by their speeches about Gram Sangathans, the history of the Congress in short, and the present situation of the kisans.

After the speeches were over, the following resolutions were read out by Pt. Hrishikesh Jha, supported by Pt. Tarakant Jha. These were unanimously passed. Last of all, due thanks were given to the invited persons and the meeting was dispersed.

#### RESOLUTIONS

(1) That due to the innocence of the tenants and entire selfishness of the deceased Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga, the rent in this part has been enhanced to such an extremity that it is highly considerable in proportion to the produce. Hence a considerable reduction in rent is absolutely necessary.

(2) That the tanks, rivulets, etc. which were instrumental to the cultivation, were settled by the Raj; the managements of the bandha and other means of cultivation have been lost sight of, which caused a heavy fall in produce and rendered the kisans incapable of clearing the rent. Therefore the kisans should be exempted from the payment of the arrears of rent, as it has become beyond their capacity. Otherwise *Karbandi* and *Satyagrah* will be unavoidable.

(3) The rivulets, bandha and the gate in the bandha, where necessary, should be managed by the Raj and tenth part of the income of the Rohika circle annually should be spent for the benefit of the local kisans according to their free will.

(4) The settlement of the *gairmazarua* land, other means of cultivation and the grazing field, after the survey settlement should be cancelled.

(5) In the jurisdiction of the Rohika circle a co-operative bank should be established by the Raj through which tenants may be in a position to revive their vitality by getting loans from the bank at low rates of interest and long instalments.

(6) A permanent light should be managed, a public Dharmashala and a footpath in front of the temple should necessarily be constructed by the Raj in Kapileshwarsthan, and permanent settlement of the land there should be stopped. This being a place of sufficient income, should be supervised by a competent man, so that the place may not be a centre of corruption. If it be ignored by the Raj, the place should be attached to the Government.

(7) Mahanthans are the public property but the Mahanthas of the local Rampur Tola and Lakshair Sthans are abusing the property. Therefore the Government should pay attention to it and conduct these places by a Panchayati Board.

Note: A true copy of the above should be sent to Circle Manager, Chief Manager, His Highness, Bihar Minister and the renowned journals for publication. His Highness is further requested to declare whether he is prepared to comply with our requests in the form of resolution by the 31st December 1938 at the latest.

In the meantime, the kisans of the locality will do their sangathan work. We are ready to prove our demands legal and justified, if necessary.

Satanjit Jha  
President

15. *From Kesav Hazari, Member, Santal Pargana District Committee and its Education Sub-Committee, to the Secretary to the Governor of Bihar*

Jamtara  
Santal Parganas  
17th October 1938

Sir,

I humbly beg leave to approach you on the subject of medium of instruction in Santal and Paharia schools in the district of Santal Parganas.

2. At the District Committee's meeting on the 2nd July 1938, my worthy colleague, Babu Ramsahay Lal, Asstt. Headmaster, Deoghar H.E. School, moved a resolution recommending to Government that the medium of instruction in Diku primary schools in the district be the language of the majority of pupils and that the medium in all Santal and Paharia primary schools in the districts be Hindi.

3. I was already aware that the arrangement in vogue was Hindi or Bengali according to environment with special provisions for considerable minorities of the pupils in each school and that two subdivisions of the district, i.e., Deoghar and Godda, with the western and northern thanas of the Dumka subdivision and the western parts of the Rajmahal and Pakur subdivisions were Hindi-speaking, while all the rest, roughly two-thirds of the district, was Bengali-speaking. I also recalled the history of the medium question in respect of the aboriginal children of the district: how up to 1914 the medium was arranged according to the situation of a school for aboriginal children in a Hindi-speaking or Bengali-speaking area; how in that year, for reasons other than educational, Bengali was replaced by Hindi in all the aboriginal schools in Bengali-speaking areas; how in 1931, after some 16 years' trial, which resulted in manifest setback of aboriginal education, the medium of Bengali had to be reintroduced in the Bengali-speaking areas, in view of the purely educational objective, namely, the uplift of the aboriginal population of those areas.

4. I felt that the Committee must not repeat the egregious blunder of 1914, which spelt misapplication of Government's educational grants, waste of Departmental efforts and retrogression of the aboriginals themselves. I, accordingly, suggested that consideration of the motion should be postponed till the Committee's next monthly meeting and that, in the meantime, the District Inspector of Schools should let each member have a copy of the papers on the subject together with his note on the present position. This was kindly agreed to. The papers were circulated in good time.

5. The District Inspector of Schools' well-documented note (copy of which is enclosed herewith for ready reference) clearly showed that the first half of the proposal before the Committee, namely the question of medium in Diku schools being the language of the majority of pupils, was redundant, while its second half, namely the question of the medium in aboriginal schools being Hindi, irrespective of environment, was, to say the least, against 16 years' practical experience. I privately appealed to the mover to withdraw his resolution. He, however, dropped its first half, and moved the second half only at the next monthly meeting of the Committee on the 5th August 1938. One can easily see why he dropped the first half: because he could not have failed to realise, now that he read the papers, that Hindi being already the medium in the Hindi-speaking areas and Bengali being the language of the majority in the Bengali-speaking areas, comprising two-thirds of the district, Hindi, the language of his obvious preference, stood to gain nothing.

6. When he moved the second half, I begged the Chair to disallow the motion.

My objections were two, namely:

- (a) That according to the Government of India Act, 1935, Santal Pargana was a partially excluded area, of which the religion, culture, etc., of minorities were among the special responsibilities of His Excellency the Governor, so that the proposed recommendation to the Government was out of order.
- (b) That the powers of the District Committee being limited to those only that were specifically conferred upon it by the Cess Act, 1880, under which it was constituted, and the power of dealing with any question of educational policy, such as that of the medium of instruction in any school or group of schools, not having been specifically conferred upon it, and such questions being, on the contrary, the province of the Education Department of Government, consideration of the motion by the District Committee was beyond its jurisdiction.

7. The Chairman was pleased to dispose of my first objection by asking the mover to use "His Excellency the Governor" in place of "Government" in the wording of his resolution. The mover accepted the Chair's amendment. I, too, being asked, accepted it. I now felt that the amended resolution should be discussed and decided on its merits rather than that it should be thrown out on a point of order.

8. So the amended resolution was moved by its sponsor. He said not a word in support of it, nor did any other member put in a word for or against it. The District Inspector's informing note with its authoritative enclosures, for the benefit of which it was that this important question was held back at the previous meeting for consideration at this meeting, was not so much as mentioned for once. It was, I would humbly submit, the duty of the Chair to have placed those documents on the table and given the meeting the advantage of a summary of their contents or to have asked the District Inspector, present at the meeting, to do so. However, he put the motion to vote straight off, without giving any opportunity for discussing the motion, and forbade the four official members to vote either way.

9. Now, Sir, these four members were:

- (1) The District Inspector, as noted above, who has held charge for six or seven years, is the author of the note in question and a native of the district, and who is on the Committee to advise it on educational questions.
- (2) The Civil Surgeon, whose duties take him all over the district.
- (3) The Sadar Sub-Divisional Officer, the greater part of whose jurisdiction is Bengali-speaking.
- (4) The Committee's Vice-Chairman and the Chairman of its Education Sub-Committee. He had been in the last settlement of the district as Assistant Settlement Officer in different subdivisions.



I protested against the ban imposed on these responsible men of education and direct knowledge of the people, but the Chairman stopped me saying that as the head of the district he preferred to ask those Government servants not to vote on the question. The result was 11 for and 2 against the motion, which was of course carried.

10. The District Inspector's note would show that the existing arrangements in the primary aboriginal schools are the best in the circumstances of each school, inasmuch as those arrangements are based on the rational principle of environment while they provide for minorities of six or more pupils. It is curious that neither the sponsor of the motion, nor any of those that voted with him, gave out why they sought to upset the present order of things, and espoused that very course of action that had been authoritatively condemned and discarded after trial for the better part of two decades of educational endeavours. On the one hand, they lacked enough brass to say a syllable against the note or its authoritative enclosures, while, on the other, they were sure of the result of the voting. It is sad to think that a question like the medium of the very elementary education of thousands of aboriginal children should have been decided in the above fashion by a statutory body entrusted with funds of Government to implement its policy in the matter as laid down by its Department of Education.

11. A precis of the papers in the case would be something like the following:

- (i) Bengali had been the medium for the Santal children of Pakur and Jamtara subdivisions till the year 1914.
- (ii) Bengali was replaced by Hindi in 1914.
- (iii) The new dispensation ran from that date up to 1931.
- (iv) Bengali was reintroduced in those two subdivisions in 1931, and has held its ground up to date.
- (v) The authorities responsible for the reintroduction of Bengali in the Pakur and Jamtara subdivisions were:
  - (a) Late Mr. E.H. Kumar, B.A., the District Inspector of Schools, who was himself a native Santal of the district.
  - (b) Late Mr. Hoernle, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner.
  - (c) Rai Sahib Kamala Prasad, M.A., Inspector of Schools, a Bihari gentleman.
  - (d) Mr. Fawcus, Director of Public Instruction.
- (vi) The District Committee, according to its statutory position in the scheme of education, was given no part or lot when the Education Department discussed and decided this rectifying measure.
- (vii) After Jamtara and Pakur, Bengali was introduced in place of Hindi in the remaining Bengali-speaking areas of the district, i.e., the south, centre and east of Dumka subdivision and almost the whole of Rajmahal subdivision.
- (viii) The authors of this supplementary measure of reform were:

- (a) Babu M.M. Biswas, M.A., the District Inspector of Schools, who is a Bengali native of the district.
- (b) Mr. M.H. Kisku, B.A., Special Deputy Inspector of Santal Education, Bhagalpur Division, himself a Santal native of the district.
- (c) Mr. Sagram Hemrom, M.B.E., then M.L.C., a Santal.
- (d) Late Mr. Hoernle, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner.
- (e) Messrs. Kazmi and Alam, Inspectors of Schools, Bihari Mohomedans.
- (f) Mr. Dain, I.C.S., Commissioner.
- (g) Mr. Fawcus, Director of Public Instruction.

12. Late Mr. Hoernle's note of 29th November 1930 explains the mystery of the displacement of Bengali by Hindi in 1914. The authors of the rehabilitation of Bengali in 1931 reconsidered the position from the viewpoint of education and nothing but education, so that they could not ignore history and environment. All the two-thirds of the district, from Jamtara to Rajmahal, had been Bengal soil, i.e., parts of the Bengali districts of Murshidabad and Birbhum, before the exigencies of administration necessitated their inclusion in the newly-formed Santal Pargana district. The older part of the population of those areas at the time of their transfer were Bengalis, larger in numbers, higher in civilization, economically better-off by far, than their Santal neighbours, whose residence in those areas was yet hardly half a century old, and whose number even in the census of 1931 was barely 36%. The latter had, and still have no literature of their own, and naturally adopted the language of the original inhabitants as their second mother tongue. Their settlement records are in Bengali, their law suits are conducted in Bengali. The vast majority of their Zamindars, Mahajans, Pradhans, Sardars are Bengalis. Their employers, as also the buyers of the produce of their fields and forests, are Bengalis. How could the authorities of 1931 help taking those rectifying measures?

13. The circumstances revealed in Mr. Hoernle's note coupled with those of the District Committee's treatment of the medium question would warrant the apprehension that the present move has a family likeness to the measures taken in 1914. But why should the elementary education of innocent Santals be suffered to be made an issue in the raging Bengali-Bihari scramble?

14. I would invite your attention to para 115 (page 44) of the report of the Santal Pargana Inquiry Committee. The percentage of literacy among the aboriginals of the district is only 0.40. An average of 13,800 Santal children attended school during the fifteen years from 1921 to 1936. But there were only 3,490 literate Santals in the census of 1931.

15. Now, the Hindi regime started in 1915 from the lowest class, and proceeded at the rate of one class a year, so that it spread throughout a primary school in six years, i.e., by the end of the year 1920, and operated fully for ten years till 1931, when Bengali was reintroduced in the lowest class. Even supposing that there had been no Santal literates before 1915, the total outturn of those ten years of Hindi medium was only 3,490 Santal literates. The conclusion

would appear to be irresistible that there must have been appalling wastage from year to year, and, making due allowance for other contributory causes, much of the wastage has to be laid at the door of the Hindi medium in vogue during that period.

16. For the aboriginals of the Bengali-speaking areas, Hindi is a foreign tongue, while Bengali is, so to say, their second mother tongue. The unfortunate Santal children of the Bengali areas who attended school from 1921 to 1930 had to do uphill work in receiving their elementary education in a foreign tongue. While attending school, they had no opportunity of speaking Hindi, or hearing it spoken. When they left school, they had no occasion to use their smattering of Hindi, for the only reading and writing that their practical life had to do with was in Bengali. How could literacy in Hindi abide under such circumstances?

17. Your attention is also invited to para 116 of the Inquiry Committee's report: "There has been no development of aboriginal schools in recent years; in fact, the position is now worse than it was 15 years ago. . . . The number of Santal primary schools has actually decreased, from 465 to 403." To the Committee's explanations of this deplorable state of things I would add the inherent difficulty of the Hindi medium for Santal children coming from the Bengali-speaking areas, its proneness to slip out of the memory of such children and lastly its uselessness for all the practical purposes of their own lives or of those of their neighbours. No wonder that the Hindi medium became more and more unpopular, and there were less and less Santal parents willing to send their children to school. I should humbly think that this unwillingness on the part of the Santals has not a little to do with the setback noticed by the Inquiry Committee.

18. The Executive Committee of the Har Malto Mahan Sabha, of which the President is Mr. Sagram Hembrom, M.B.E., ex-M.L.C., at its meeting held on the 16th August 1938, passed resolutions protesting against the District Committee's resolution in question, supporting the existing educational arrangement, and condemning the two Santal members of the District Committee who voted for the proposal.

19. I humbly beg leave to enclose herewith petitions of protest made by the Santals of thirty-six villages in the Jamtara and Dumka Sadar subdivisions for favour of your kind perusal.

20. Apart from the merits of the case, I would beg you to consider the following questions:

- (i) Was the District Committee competent to consider the motion that it voted upon?
- (ii) Was it not a material irregularity on the part of the District Committee not to have made over this question of medium of instruction to its Education Sub-Committee, which alone was competent to thrash it out in a way demanded by its first-rate importance?
- (iii) Could the District Committee ignore the District Inspector's documented

note, for consideration of which the previous meeting was postponed?

(iv) Was it within the Chairman's competence to forbid the official members to vote on the motion?

(v) Did not the Chairman's ban affect the votes materially?

21. I pray in all humility that His Excellency may be graciously pleased to veto the District Committee's resolution in question and pass such other orders as His Excellency might deem proper.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant

Kesav Hazari

Enclosures not included.

*16. From Vallabhbhai Patel to Nawab of Chhatari, Lucknow*

October 21, 1938

My dear Nawab Saheb,

I have received your letter of the 18th October. As the Talukdars of Oudh are meeting on the 27th October to consider the matter it would be advisable to await their decision. In view of the decision of our Committee on this subject it would not be proper for me to proceed further in the matter unless the Talukdars of Oudh also agree to accept our Award. In the event of their agreeing to accept our decision I would advise you to approach the Premier and fix our meeting at Delhi at his convenience.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Vallabhbhai

Nawab of Chhatari

22 Outram Road

Lucknow.

*17. From Kesav Hazari, Member, Santal Pargana District Committee and its Education Sub-Committee, to the Secretary to the Governor of Bihar*

Jamtara

Santal Parganas

30th October 1938

Sir,

In continuation of my representation, dated the 17th October current, on the subject of medium of instruction of aboriginals in primary schools in Santal

Parganas, I humbly beg leave to submit herewith petitions made by Santals of 17 villages in the Jamtara and Dumka Sadar subdivisions in addition to similar petitions of the Santals of 36 other villages in the former subdivision, submitted with my above letter.

2. I may humbly take this opportunity to enclose herewith a cutting from the *Hindusthan Standard* of October 25, current, containing Dr. Rajendra Prasad's recommendations about the question of medium of instruction, arising in connection with the Bengali-Bihari controversy. It is no mere accident that these recommendations should authoritatively endorse the existing arrangements in the primary schools in Santal Parganas, as mentioned in the note of the District Inspector of Schools, already submitted for your kind perusal. Like the authorities responsible for the reintroduction of Bengali in the primary schools in the Bengali-speaking areas of the district in 1931, the learned doctor has apparently viewed the question from the standpoint of history and environment and the demands of education itself, unprejudiced by extraneous considerations, and his position in the country's public life would not let him be a party to the childish, but nonetheless mischievous, game of trying to reduce the influence of Bengali and the Bengalis in the Province and installing that of Hindi and the Biharis in its place even at the cost of the very elementary education of the innocent aboriginals, which is, beyond question, the first step in the noble work of their advancement.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
Kesav Hazari

Copy for kind perusal of Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

Kesav Hazari  
31.10.38

Enclosures not included.

18. *From Gopinath Bardoloi, Prime Minister, Assam, to Subhas Chandra Bose, President, All India Congress*

Shillong  
17th November 1938

My dear Rashtrapati,

Pressure of work has prevented me from writing to you in detail about things I wanted to write long ago. Telephonic communications are often times dangerous and in matters in which I want to keep you informed, it is surely not desirable to

take recourse to telephone.

1. Here is the famous bulletin which I send you in original, a stencil copy. I think it is just time to publish it and want you [to] do so with flashing headlines in all papers all over India. The publication must appear in Delhi papers particularly. In this connection Lord Linlithgow's assurance about the European groups appearing in *Roy's Weekly* of October 24, 1938, may be shown as a set-off.

[2.] Without my elaborating the European attitude, you can imagine what it is. If rumour is correct, three ex-Ministers, Maulavi A. Matin Chaudhury, their "propagandist", S. Rohini Chaudhury and Maulavi Munnawarali, are under their pay. Practically all the members who are not with us now are also in their pay. I think, besides this, they are intending to make lump payments to some of our members as well as to some of their waverers by the 15th November; for, from our talk with people in the farthest corner of the Province we found that they all said that they would definitely let us know their attitude after 15th November. In the meanwhile we have definite information that some of our men were taken to some garden managers etc. and offered money. And yet it is these people who accuse us of corruption and bribery.

As you may know, we are finding it impossible to find money to send people to canvass members in various places. As usual, we are of course depending on our moral strength, whatever may be the ultimate result. But in face of this poisonous atmosphere and with simple members as some of us (viz., our recent acquisitions) are, we have to keep in constant touch with them. This means that some of our whips and other people have got to remain on constant run—all of which means expenditure.

As I might have reported to you, we had from the members' deposit quota (of Rs.25 p.m.) a sum of nearly Rs.9,000 (all of us not paying the quota—in which case it might have come to about Rs.12,000). The sum was meant to be spent for specific purposes, not, I believe, for a kind of expenditure for which I apply for your kind sanction. I believe a sum of Rs.1,500 may for the present cover our expenditure and I beg to apply for your kind sanction to do so immediately.

3. As regards our strength, in spite of all manner of statements by the Opposition men, we definitely feel that we have 55, but I expect one or two additions and a few absentees from the opposition group. As reported before, all manner of communal propaganda is [afoot] and, what is more, communal riots were fomented to create Moslem solidarity. My last visit to Sylhet seems to have shaken that solidarity and today Sylhet masses are divided between those acknowledging the League on one side and those acknowledging the Jamait-ul-Ulema on the other. Sir Md. Saadulla visited Sylhet obviously for maintaining the solidarity which the Muslims are going to lose. On the other hand, among the members themselves they seem to continue their old attitude. Muslim goondas and students are again expected to be vigorous to prevent any Surma Valley Muslim coming over to us.

We are also feeling shaky on account of the great allurements the European agents are likely to offer to our men.

4. Supposing we come out successful with a narrow majority, should we continue the Government or advise the Governor to dissolve? However great the Governor's assurance might be to see to the successful working of the Constitution, I feel an I.C.S. Governor would not like anything better than to see us fight among ourselves and let us do nothing. If the Governor had any other wish, he should have dissolved the Assembly long ago. I am definitely of opinion that if the Governor would agree to a dissolution, we would be returned with a thumping majority in spite of the purposeful creation of many interests. On the other hand, if we go on we may not be able to implement all our pledges and may ultimately become unpopular. I already broached the matter to the Governor but he did not say yes or nay. May I have your advice on the subject?

5. We have wired to the Government of India according to the advice of Sardarji Patel regarding income-tax realised in England.

6. We are participating in the Planning Committee. Can we have some representation there?

No more for the present. I desire to tell you that you should be kind enough to advise us without reservation and not wait for advice to be sought for. We will always hail your presence in the Province from time to time till we have gained sufficient solidarity, at any rate.

Namaste,

Yours sincerely,  
G.N. Bardoloi

P.S. Maulana Syed Hussain Ahmed is doing splendid Congress work through the Jamait-ul-Ulema. He will soon go away but we all feel that a set of workers preaching that ideal [is] necessary to be engaged. We want 10 such workers on a pay of, say, Rs.16 p.m. on the average for about a year. May I expect the necessary fund from your Committee?

To  
Rashtrapati Srijut Subhas Chandra Bose  
Calcutta.

Copy forwarded to Babu Rajendra Prasad, Member, All India Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee.

S.R. Dutt  
Secretary  
Assam Assembly Congress Party



Dr. Rajendra Prasad with Jawaharlal Nehru and C. Rajagopalachari



19. *From Vallabhbhai Patel to Abul Kalam Azad (Calcutta)*

ALL INDIA CONGRESS PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE

Purushottam Mansion  
Opp. Opera House  
Bombay-4  
20th December 1938

My dear Maulana Saheb,

I have received your letter of the 17th instant and accordingly I am sending you the papers concerning the Orissa controversy over some allegations made against the Prime Minister and his administration by Mr. Chintamani Misra.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sd.)  
for Vallabhbhai Patel

*Enclosure 1:*

(From Vallabhbhai Patel to Chintamani Misra, Editor, *Lokamata*)

ALL INDIA CONGRESS PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE

Camp: Bardoli  
August 21, 1938

Dear Friend,

I have received your letter of the 11th August 1938, in which you make serious charges against the Premier of Orissa and his administration. It is impossible for me to give you any answer without making any inquiry in this matter. I do not see how you can blame the Prime Minister for a legislation which has been unanimously approved by the Congress Party in the Assembly. This is the first time that I hear your voice against it. The Tenancy Legislation may or may not get sanction from the Government of India, it is another matter altogether. It is not easy to get the assent of the Zamindars, whose interest is affected by it. It is not denied that the present rate of rents requires to be reduced. Admitting that as an accepted fact, it is for those who claim the present Bill as an expropriatory measure on the ground that the reduction of rent is unduly high to suggest what amount of reduction would be called legitimate and would not be regarded as expropriatory. I do not think that your criticism about it is justified. The other charges you have preferred against him are more serious and I cannot answer them without investigation.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai Patel  
Chairman

*Enclosure 2:*

(From Vallabhbhai Patel to Biswanath Das)

Camp: Bardoli  
Bombay  
August 21, 1938

My dear Biswanath Das,

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a complaint received by me [from] Mr. Chintamani Misra, Editor, *Lokamata*, making serious charges against you and your administration. I do not know this gentleman nor do I know whether he is a Congressman or not, but whether he is a Congressman or not is immaterial. Some of the charges mentioned in the complaint are of [a] very serious nature. I should like you to send me a full report about it.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

*Enclosure 3:*

(From Vallabhbhai Patel to Gopabandhu Choudhuri, Cuttack)

Camp: Bardoli  
August 21, 1938

My dear Gopabandhu,

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a complaint received from the Editor, *Lokamata*, against the Prime Minister and his administration. Some of the charges in the complaint are of a very serious nature. It is my experience that people dissatisfied by the Ministers for some reason or other, easily make serious charges, but when such charges are made they cannot be ignored and must be investigated. I, therefore, request you to send me your report about it as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai

*Enclosure 4:*

(From Biswanath Das to Vallabhbhai Patel)

Cuttack  
25th August 1938

Dear Sardarji,

Your Ref. No. 483 dated 21st August 1938. I received your letter and the memorandum with the sigh of relief today which it is hard for me to describe. The

and let you know in time. But some of the complaints are oral ones and [have] been published in newspapers and, slow as our Ministers' Publicity Department is, the Press comments in many cases have not been ... [illegible]. I understand from your letter that you want me to send a report promptly; you would be holding your enquiry, if so required, on my report. If I am correct, then it is all right for I in my opinion find disposal of these complaints on my reports will not help the situation. It would be better if someone of your Committee personally come over to Orissa and investigate these things and either justify the agitation or give it a [stricture]. A visit from some member of your Committee will help a good deal to clear the atmosphere.

Yours sincerely,  
Gopabandhu

*Enclosure 6:*

(From Biswanath Das to Vallabhbhai Patel)

Cuttack  
31 August 1938

My dear Sardarjee,

I herewith enclose the letter I sent to Shri Gopabandhu Choudhury, President, P.C.C. I do not want any enquiry to be undertaken by him for reasons already stated. Please have it done by yourself or Rajendrababu. If none of you could be available, you may please put off this enquiry for a week or two.

I beg of you to conduct this enquiry as early as possible. If both of you will not be available please have some impartial person such as Sjt. Mahadev Desai in [whom] Mahatmajee [has] unshaked confidence. Anyway I leave the whole thing to you.

With pranams,

Yours sincerely,  
B.N. Das

(Copy of letter from Biswanath Das to Gopabandhu Choudhury, President, Utkal P.C.C.)

30 August 1938

Dear Gopabandhu Babu,

I send you herewith a copy of the letter I sent to Sardarji. They have been scandalising you. If you enquire into this and say there is nothing, they will further scandalise you. So far as I am concerned I am ready with facts. Myself and my colleagues welcome this opportunity and demand an enquiry. It should be by some important member of the Parliamentary Committee. Please write to Sardarji or Rajendrababu to come for a day or two and attend this. It is impossible to maintain discipline without a serious enquiry. You may collect all

information, but the enquiry must be done by some of them. This is the view of myself and my colleagues. Nityanandbabu had a talk with me regarding your letter to him.

Yours sincerely,  
B.N. Das

Enclosure 7:

(From Biswanath Das to Vallabhbbhai Patel)

Cuttack  
3 December 1938

My dear Sardarji,

I write this letter to bring to your notice the immediate need of attending to the affairs in Orissa. I have informed you from time to time how the nine members who formed part of the Parallel P.C.C. under the guidance of Pt. Nilakantha Das and a few others have been carrying on their worst propaganda against the Ministry. It is all the more regrettable that they should have joined with the Zamindars and reactionaries and should have carried on this propaganda with their money. I am sorry to state this and I give you my reasons for making this statement. You will please recollect that *Lokamata*, an Oriya weekly paper, was first started as the Congress organ, subsidised out of Congress Parliamentary Committee funds during the elections. You will please recollect how Mr. Chintamani Misra, the *de facto* editor and lieutenant of Pt. Nilakantha Das gave an undertaking at Delang that he would no more carry on propaganda against the Ministry and against the Provincial Congress Committee. This paper was again strengthened by another paper called *Nianakhunta* subsidised by the Raja Bahadur of Khallikote and others, edited by a man who is the lieutenant of Pt. Godavarish Misra. These two newspapers carried on propaganda against the ministry and the two Tenancy Bills and other legislations that we undertook including even the Small Holders Relief Bill on the lines of the Bombay Bill. Three members of the Assembly, namely, Sri Dibakar Patnaik, Sri Jagannath Das, Pt. Godavarish Misra, President, D.C.C., Puri, and Mr. Chintamani Misra are the editors of the paper *Lokamata* subsequent to the Delang settlement. It has been going on with the insidious propaganda against the Ministry till the District Board elections, when they were forced to sing the halleluiahs of Government for their own existence in District Board elections. A friend has secured three letters of Pt. Nilakantha Das and Mr. Chintamani Misra, addressed to Mr. Lingaraj Panigrahi, Vakil and lieutenant of the Raja Bahadur of Khallikote and a leading member of his party, for money. The contents will speak for themselves. The originals are with me. Translations of the two Oriya

letters are given to you, translated by my friend Mr. Bodram Dube, Minister for Local Self-Government. Another letter is in English. I make no comments as the facts speak for themselves. We knew these facts long before, but it becomes difficult to convey to you or place them before the Parliamentary Sub-Committee in the absence of specific proof. No proof is now necessary because the originals are with me to be sent to you whenever required.

2. You may please recollect that in Delang the trouble about the Assembly Party was discussed while Gopabandhu Babu, the new President of the P.C.C., was authorised to enquire into the troubles in Ganjam district. Gopabandhu Babu's award, mild as it may be, is enough to damn the Congress in the eyes of the public. Here is a District Board (in Ganjam district) with a Congress Party and a Congress President elected as head of the executive with the strength of the Raja Bahadur of Khallikote because they are divided among themselves. Mr. Dibakar Patnaik, President of the Parallel P.C.C. is the President of the District Board. They cannot have their existence in the Board without the help of the Raja Bahadur, who is an avowed opponent of the Congress. Pt. Godavarish Misra, M.L.A., had also his share of benefit in the District Board of Ganjam. He is the Chief Agent of Lakshmi Insurance Company for Orissa. Teachers in the District Board are called upon to insure their lives in the Lakshmi. There is a resolution of the Board diverting the Provident Funds for Lakshmi Insurance. The P.C.C. President in his award also requested me to examine this question and take action. Besides these two papers—I mean *Lokamata* and *Nianakhunta* subsidised by zamindars, the Raja Bahadur and his friends have got also two other daily papers with a limited circulation, called *Asha* in vernacular and *The New Orissa* in English, both edited by Mr. Sashibhusan Rath, who was set up for a seat in the Legislative Assembly in a by-election in April 1938. You enquired into their allegations with other members of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee at Delang. In your statement to the Press, you were good enough not to make any mention about these allegations as false and unfounded thinking that the matter was closed at Delang. They have given the utmost publicity to these by filing it in a defamation case. In the result the allegations are fully published and made use of even in a Court of Law while the results of the enquiry are not published. Herewith send you the full letter of those nine members of the Legislative Assembly, which was put in as Ex. XVI in New Orissa Defamation Case, wherein this letter was proved by Mr. Dibakar Patnaik. I leave it to you to see how difficult it is for me to enforce discipline under the circumstances. May I, therefore, request you to publish the results of the enquiry at Delang and also to undertake an immediate enquiry into the affairs in Orissa. I need hardly state that delay is dangerous for the Congress.

3. I have informed you the need of a Member of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee or a Member of the Working Committee to attend the Conference of Zamindars to be convened by the Governor. Mr. Boag, the Acting Governor, was very anxious to hold this conference any time in November. But it was not possible because of Rajendra Babu's health. Sir J.A. Hubback may think of

convening this conference soon after he returns. I agree to attend the conference if a member of the Working Committee or the Parliamentary Sub-Committee is invited. I have informed the Governor that I cannot do anything in the matter. Both the Ministry and the Assembly Party will be bound by any advice that is given. Therefore the date of this will depend on the convenience of the Member attending the conference.

4. Koraput district is part of the old Vizagapatnam district in Madras. It is 10,000 sq. miles in extent and is a partially excluded area. I have informed you the reports that I was getting from the police and the magistracy regarding the interference of all the three elected members of the Assembly as also other Congress Members. Files are there to show how the Governor was and has been anxious about the law and order in this district. I have also informed them of our limitations in a partially excluded area. I have informed Gopa Babu all these in due course. These three Members of the Assembly were members of the Parallel P.C.C. I, therefore, feel it difficult to warn them strongly, lest the nine members [should] feel that I do this because I bear a grudge against them.

Under these circumstances I invite your immediate attention to the affairs in Orissa and request you to come yourself or depute any Member who could spare two or three days and look into the whole thing.

Yours sincerely,  
Biswanath Das

[Copy of Nilakantha Das's letter (written in English) to Lingaraj Panigrahi]

40 Longwood Hotel  
Simla  
9 September 1938

My dear Lingaraj Babu,

Many thanks for your letter. Please give my blessings and goodwill to Rath. I am glad that you deal directly with Chintamani and try to see that he at least is enabled to carry on somehow so long as possible though sudden crash and ruin always may stare him in the face. Never mind, for the present appears to be a critical time after the exposure in the Court. Chintamani also writes to me that he is in touch with you regularly.

As to Dibakar's inadvertent remarks etc., you know how Dibakar should be constantly guarded. I never talked to him directly on any subject regarding this affair. I did not want to do it before I am assured of a stability for organised work. For you know how weakness in a leader resulting in want of proper support and sustained guidance with an outlook may lead friends to betray. The wherewithal for such support and guidance is the primary necessity. Want of it coupled with kept up unexpectation unfulfilled made me you know even, physically unfit and continuously unwell (sic).

The exposure in Court, however, was merely an incident, and a windfall, so to say. But still it must be carried to its logical conclusions, and that too requires effort and expense. I am sure you understand more than I can say.

I am much better in health. I shall reach home either 25 Sept. evening or 26th morning, so far as I can calculate at present. I hope you are doing well with your family and friends.

Yours affly.,  
Nilakantha Das

P.S. I have written very trenchant editorial notes for the *Naba Bharat* this month. Please see if they are published.

N. Das

[Copy of Nilakantha Das's letter (written in Oriya and translated into English) to Lingaraj Panigrahi]

Naba Bharat Office  
P.O. Chandni Chouk  
Cuttack  
30 June 1938

Dear Lingaraj Babu,

By the time Chintamani received your letter today I accidentally arrived here to start for Simla. There was no more hope. All would have come to a dead stop. Chintamani had in a way already made up his mind to go to you all at once. The moment I came to know of it I borrowed Rs.200 from Prof. Bipin Babu on the plea of my need for expenses of my journey to Simla. Before this I had myself borrowed Rs.200 for my journey expenses from Satyabadi. Perhaps you have not been able to imagine what would have happened if all would have stopped at a time when a befitting situation in the interests of the people was coming to the prominence so conspicuously. I have no capacity so as to borrow. Bipin Babu, a new man as he is, had advanced the loan. He being a professor does not know anything more. No one else would have lent. If it comes to such a pass after so much trouble, if nobody could be depended upon, then we would think whether it is desirable to move in this direction. The goal is visible but there is no means to achieve it. Country does not belong to us only. Let the country think [for] herself. What more could we do? You finished your work by writing a letter, but who is to think of the situation here? What income or means I have? What Chintamani would do? He personally could perhaps live happier if he would take to some business of his own. You will write to Chintamani after due deliberation on all these matters. If nobody would come to rescue at the time of danger, what could be done? You think over it carefully. I had strength for everything else but in this age it is not proper to come [in] the field without money. Today I was going to Simla. Do whatever you think proper.

I hope you are well.

Yours affectionately,  
Nilakantha Das

[Copy of Chintamani Misra's letter (written in Oriya and translated into English) to Lingaraj Panigrahi]

P.O. Chandni Chouk  
Cuttack  
14 October 1938

Respected Sir,

I received your letter. The delay in reply is due to holidays. You must have seen the publication regarding Talgaon in the *Lokamata* (newspaper). Nilakantha Babu and Godavarish Babu will meet all the workers on the 16th. You will see them on that day. I had to go, but on account of much inconvenience here I am not able to go. After consultation with both the Pandits please advise for vigorous actions. Today I am writing to Jagannath and Dibakar regarding this. You had given word to arrange Rs. 100 a month for the *Lokamata*. What became of that? I have not got Rs. 50 in balance which you have to give me. Please send it soon. If you do not make some arrangement for the *Lokamata* I will be compelled to stop publication of the paper within a month or so. On account of poor financial circumstances of the press I have sent away the family to the village and am alone putting up in the precincts of the press. In spite of all my efforts to reduce the expenses I will not be able to make the press a good running concern. The *Lokamata* entails a loss of Rs. 200 per month to me. Out of this, if you share a loss of Rs. 100 I shall arrange Rs. 100 from other sources. Please reply after due deliberation.

Affectionately yours,  
Chintamani

*Enclosure 8:*

[Copy of Confidential Report (Political) for the second half of November 1938]

CONFIDENTIAL

GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA  
(Special Section)

Cuttack  
3rd December 1938

Report: The second half of November 1938.

*Political.*

In Koraput, the present political activities among the hill tribes cause some uneasiness. Propaganda is being carried on and it is reported that the hill tribes



of the Jeypore and Nowrangpur circles who joined the Congress believe that they are immune from law. The report shows that several petty riots have recently occurred in this area, owing to persons (mostly Congress Party recruits) taking forcible possession of land. In one instance the Congress flag was planted on such land and the local Sub-Inspector, who arrested the accused persons and removed the flag, was attacked with an axe. The Collector has been instructed to watch the situation.

The Congress leaders, viz., Messrs. Godavarish Misra, M.L.A., Gopabandhu Choudhury and Dibakar Patnaik, M.L.A., were given a rousing reception when they visited Koraput in the beginning of November. They were met by the nephew of the Maharaja of Jeypore and a number of local Congress leaders and volunteers, who were hill men dressed in uniform and with lathis, and were taken in a procession to a public meeting. In his speech Mr. Gopabandhu Choudhury linked the people of India to convicts who had been allowed the privilege of discussing their grievances with fellow convicts, and opined that the only cure for the present conditions was complete independence. He criticised the British for draining Indian money from the country by introducing foreign cloth, salt duties, etc., and advocated the use of khaddar. He pointed out that the heavy monthly expenses of the Viceroy was found by taxing the people of this country. Two more public meetings were held and addressed by these visitors. A training centre at Nuaput (near Jeypore) was opened. Mr. Godavarish Misra performed the flag hoisting ceremony, while Mr. Gopabandhu Choudhury performed the opening ceremony. In his speech Mr. Godavarish Misra urged them to use home-spun cloth and to give up intoxicants for (sic) training at the camp. Spinning, scouting and village service are included in the curriculum at present. They are also receiving lectures on farming, animal husbandry, and scouting.

*Enclosure 9:*

[From Vallabhbhai Patel to Biswanath Das, Prime Minister, Orissa  
(Cuttack)]

December 8, 1938

My dear Biswanath Das,

I have received your letter of the 3rd December and I am grieved to find that these people are troubling you so much. Unfortunately my hands are too full on this side and Rajendrababu has been practically in bed. I had written to Maulana Saheb to go to Orissa, but he is also otherwise busy and I am sorry for the delay. Today I am going to Wardha for the Working Committee and I will arrange to do something soon after the meeting is over.

Yours sincerely,  
Vallabhbhai Patel

*Enclosure 10:*

(Extract from letter dated Cuttack, the 8th December 1938, from Biswanath Das, Prime Minister of Orissa, to Vallabhbhai Patel)

Let me again remind you of my request to have the allegations made by Chintamani Misra enquired at your earliest convenience. I am starting for Delhi on the 12th to attend the conference of Home Ministers to return on the 20th or 21st instant. I then go to my village on the 24th during X'mas to return to Cuttack about the 2nd of next month. People will be busy with Provincial Congress Committee elections till the 8th or 9th. The enquiry which I have been requesting may be undertaken soon after 8th January.

*Enclosure 11:*

(Copy of tour diary of Prime Minister, Orissa)

## TOUR DIARY—ANGUL

Started from Cuttack at 4-30 p.m. on the 6th December 1938. Visited Kampsala and Kosala on the 7th December 1938. Returned at 9 a.m. and reached Cuttack 12 noon on the 8th.

Visited Angul as per programme reaching the place 6th evening. On the 7th morning Col. Verghese, the Director of Public Health, also came here, and we visited the places where the refugees from Talcher are living. I asked the Director of Public Health to go in advance, while myself and the Sub-Divisional Officer, Angul, started at 10-30 a.m. Messrs. Harekrushna Mahtab, Member, Congress Working Committee, Girija Bhusan Dutt, M.L.A., also accompanied us. The refugees are all from Talcher State and are living at Kosala and Kampsala in large numbers and scattered over a few other places in small numbers. Angul is surrounded on all sides by the Orissa States, namely, Talcher, Bamra, Rairakhol, Athmallik, Daspalla, Narsingpur, Hindol and Dhenkanal. This subdivision extends over 800 sq. miles with a population of 143,000. This is a partially excluded area and is a subdivision of Cuttack district.

The figures below give the number of refugees:

	Refugees and their description				
	Males	Females	Boys	Girls	Total
Kosala	2,483	2,473	2,309	2,075	9,340
Kampsala	2,500	1,640	1,320	1,250	6,710
Scattered in other places	..	..	..	..	1,000
Grand Total	4,983	4,113	3,629	3,325	17,050

Note: Figures furnished by the volunteers are higher by about 1,400 persons. The above are official figures.

I visited only two places, namely, first, 32 miles away—Kampsala, and then Kosala, 20 miles away from Angul. In both these places I had a talk with the men and womenfolk, enquiring the reasons that led them to leave Talcher and also induced them to leave Angul and go back to Talcher. It was rather strange to see that the determination of the womenfolk is more deep-seated than those of the menfolk present. This determination in them is justified by the factor that they selected out of the way places and that the refugee population includes men, women and children of all ages. If demonstrations were their sole purpose they would have [come to] a nearer roadside place than these out of the way places. Again the people that have taken to this exodus include persons who are not landless. In both these places [we found] there [were] over 50 Sarbarkars, who are fairly respectable people occupying prominent positions in rural life. Then again there [were] people of all classes and castes, including depressed class people.

*Stories of their oppression:* They speak of terrible oppression that they have suffered. Having heard stories from the menfolk, I could not believe that any administration in this 20th century could be so soulless. I came to the womenfolk and appealed to them to think of their present miseries, to think of their children, hearth and home and especially the sufferings of the babies in this severe cold. Some of them wept before me and narrated how they were treated, which is shocking to any society. Two widows who were near to me narrated how the little savings they made out of the earning of their children from the colliery, were forcibly taken away along with their little gold and also stated how they were molested. The determination not to live in a place such as this seems to me deep-rooted among women more than in the men. One washerwoman who seems to have been well off before, wept loud[ly], when so many women were in tears, describing how her savings including 5 tolas of paternal gold and 22 tolas of silver etc. were looted and how herself was molested and her children are left penniless. When the menfolk saw that I was not prepared to believe much of what they stated, they brought a number of persons who were either young or middleaged, to show me how mercilessly they were beaten. I found on their buttocks scars of severe beating. One buttock is not yet healed and is under treatment of the Medical Officer. I have asked the Medical Officer in charge of the camp to give a list of persons who were treated by him.

*Immediate causes of this exodus examined.* One has to realise the Oriya temperament. People, ordinarily, are meek and mild and are always averse to leave their homes. This unwillingness is further deepened by the fact that this is cold weather and it is shivering in Angul. Again, this is the harvesting season when people hardly could leave their villages, not to speak of their homes. Under the circumstances I wanted to know the immediate causes which made these people forget all difficulties and take to this exodus. After talking and discussing with men and women for hours and persuading them to return to their homes, I find these to be the immediate causes of the exodus:

1. There has been a number of taxes on ordinary necessities of life. The pitch of assessment depends not only on any regulated lines or principles but on the

whims of the Ruler. Whenever people make payments towards the assessment on land, the amount so collected is credited towards other taxes leaving the land revenue in arrears. They were somehow able to pay these taxes before. Since the present economic depression it was difficult for them to pay. They had [of] necessity to fall on what little reserve they had. This reserve seems to have been depleted. From last year the State insisted upon payment of all arrears. In the result the good lands in some villages had to be sold to the State at a fixed price of Rs.75 per acre, of which Rs.25 being credited towards mutation fee payable to the State. The villagers have thus lost all the good lands in the village and these lands were leased out to people on terms of Dhulibhag by which the cultivator is allowed half the gross.

2. The State insisted that all *kist* this year should be paid at once. The *kist* falls due in December. These poor people were not able to find money before harvesting crops. The result was that their crops standing on the fields were attached by the State and those harvested and kept in the thrashing places were also attached. State subjects were not allowed to use them without payment of all the arrears. These seem to me the immediate cause which fanned the flame which was already burning.

3. A number of Sarvarkars of the State are said to have been dismissed and new Sarvarkars have been appointed. These new Sarvarkars are men finding favour with the Ruler or are his followers who made it their sole business to oppress the people with State help. Some people, therefore, first came out to Angul about the middle of November and others followed them soon. The womenfolk did not leave their hearth and home till ornaments from some women, as they narrated, were forcibly taken away and a few of them were also molested. I was told that these people were coming with whatever little moveable property they had. State officials are no more than their . . . beddings or clothing or some quantity of rice (sic). Having gone into their sheds made of leaves and branches of trees I saw some of them have got with them a few utensils. In course of these few weeks the villagers in Angul have shown utmost sympathy and courtesy in spite of the great loss they are incurring. The [leaves] and branches of the *Kolathi* (horse gram) sown around the huts are eaten away by the people. Green plants which could be eaten by men within the surrounding jungle are gradually disappearing.

*Problem for Orissa.* Migration of [a] huge number of refugees in a subdivision with a population of about 1,40,000 presents a serious difficulty in all the activities of the Provincial Government. We have deputed two Medical Officers with medicine to prevent any outbreak of epidemics. The police patrol is always there and a few police constables are also posted in Talcher borders to avoid clash or any other accident. These refugees have to cook their food and they necessarily make use of the fuels in the Angul forest to a certain extent, though I feel sure that there has been a marked tendency in them to call everything provincial "their own" and everything State as that "of foreign". These feelings make me believe that they are probably making use of two neighbouring State forests more than

our provincial forests.

I had a discussion with the Sub-Divisional Officer and the Superintendent of Police regarding this. They feel that it will be difficult to prevent human tendency to commit crimes when he is driven to such necessity through sheer hunger. All their crops are standing in their fields in the Talcher State. They will be very soon spoiled or eaten away by wild animals. The State Ruler may without any difficulty forgo the arrears as also the income of the lands. These unfortunate people are however sure to starve. Our difficulties increase with their determination not to move from our area and their unavoidable starvation. Having nothing to call their own they prefer to stay here as they find that they are safe without any molestation from any authority.

All these make me feel that the Government of India should be moved to take immediate steps.

Chief Minister  
Orissa

20. *From Biswanath Das, Chief Minister, Orissa, to Abul Kalam Azad, Member, All India Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee (Calcutta)*

Cuttack  
22 December 1938

My dear Azadji,

I have received your letter of 17th December 1938. You will please remember my conversation with you on phone while you were at Patna. It is not good that I should write to Pandit Nilakantha Das to come with all complaints against the Ministry to Calcutta. There is no use also in calling only Pandit Nilakantha Das alone. His lieutenant, Mr. Chintamani Misra, has to come. He is the person who has addressed the letter to Sardarji. If Pandit Nilakantha Das comes along he may disown the whole thing. Added to this, Pandit Godavarish, Joint Editor of *Lokamata* with Mr. Chintamani Misra, has also to be called. I would, therefore, request you to call these three gentlemen to Calcutta on the first as fixed by you.

I was ill for a few days and hence going to my village, keeping my stenographer here to receive any communication from you and direct them at once to my place. In the absence of any communication I will start for Calcutta on the 31st night by Puri Express.

Hope you have fully recovered your strength.

With pranams,

Yours sincerely,  
Biswanath Das

21. *From Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to Nilakantha Das, Godavarish Misra and Chintamani Misra*

December 27, 1938

Babu Rajendra Prasad was to go to Cuttack in connection with the Orissa Tenancy Amendment Bill. It was decided that he will also go through the complaints against the Hon'ble B.N. Das, Premier, Orissa. It is a pity that he is not keeping good health and is still unable to undertake the journey. As this is a matter which can no more be delayed, I wish to expedite it. But as it is difficult for me also to go to Cuttack at present, I think it would be better if you take the trouble of coming to Calcutta on the 1st January 1939. The Premier will also come, and the needful will be done here. Kindly let me know by wire that you are coming here on the 1st January so that I may inform the Premier also; or you may inform him directly so that he may start on 31st instant for Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,  
Abul Kalam Azad

22. *From N. Kanungo to Abul Kalam Azad*

Cuttack  
27th December 1938

Respected Maulana Saheb,

Our Premier Sjt. Biswanath Das has gone to his village home and he writes to me to know if the arrangement which was made by you in course of the telephonic conversation with him, stands good or not, that is, Sjt. Biswanath Das has to go to meet you in Calcutta on the 1st January and that in the meantime you would have written to the following gentlemen to be present there on that date also. On receipt of your reply I will have to send a special messenger to Sjt. Biswanath Das so that he can come in time to be present in Calcutta on the 1st January 1939. If any alterations are to be made, you will kindly let me know of the same for communication to him. He has engagements fixed for him on the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th January, which cannot be altered.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,  
N. Kanungo

Address of the gentlemen who are to be asked for by you:

- (1) Pandit Nilakantha Das, Village: Sri Ramchandrapur; Post Office: Sakhigopal; District: Puri.
- (2) Babu Godavarish Misra, M.L.A.; P.O.: Banpur; Distt.: Puri.
- (3) Babu Chintamani Misra, Naba Bharat Press, Cuttack.

23. *From Abul Kalam Azad to N. Kanungo (Cuttack)*

December 28, 1938

I am in receipt of your letter of 27th December, 1938. I have sent letters to the three gentlemen, according to the proposal of Mr. Biswanath Das, and am waiting for their replies. On receipt of replies about their arrival here on the first January, I shall inform you by wire, so that Mr. Das may also come here. In case I do not get any reply [and] they [cannot] come here on the first, I shall inform you about it even then.

Yours sincerely,  
Abul Kalam Azad

24. *From Nilakantha Das to Abul Kalam Azad*

P.O. Sakhigopal  
Naba Bharat Office  
P.O. Chandni Chouk  
Cuttack  
30 December 1938

Dear Maulana Saheb,

I received your letter today and have acknowledged receipt of it by wire. I returned from Delhi on the 20th when I arranged a week's tour programme from the 27th December to the 4th January in various places in the district. A part of it has been covered. It is not possible to cancel the remaining part of the programme all at once. Orissa University Committee, of which I am the Chairman, meets from the 5th January. It may go on up to the 10th. As soon as I am free I shall be glad to meet you, if you consider it necessary.

I am very sorry that Rajendra Babu is not yet well. He is ailing for a long time. May he get well soon. I have absolutely no definite knowledge of any proposal of his coming to Orissa to go through the allegations against the Hon'ble B.N. Das or in connection with any Orissa Tenancy Amendment Bill. I remember only to have read some such thing in the papers long ago. Even then, as far as I recollect, there was no reference to any Orissa Tenancy Amendment Bill. As far as I know no Orissa Tenancy Amendment Bill is on the anvil now. Maybe the Government are considering another amendment of the Act. Many such amendments, however, are immediately necessary.

If the consideration of the enquiry can be postponed, I shall be highly obliged if you kindly arrange to send me copies of the allegations, or points for consideration, and any other necessary connected matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Nilakantha Das

25. *From Godavarish Misra to Abul Kalam Azad, Member, All India Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee (Calcutta)*

P.O. Banpur

Distt. Puri

December 31st, 1938

Dear Maulana Saheb,

I was away on tour and returning therefrom received your letter No. 566 dated the 27th instant yesterday. I am in the midst of various worries caused by a criminal case and other enquiries started on the initiative of a person who of late has been in the good books of the Hon'ble the Chief Minister. The criminal case is proceeding from yesterday at this place, which is far away from the headquarters of the Court even during the holidays. Besides, there is not time enough now for me to start this evening for Calcutta in order to be able to see you there tomorrow. There is no telegraph office here and I could not therefore intimate to you my inability in the matter earlier than this. There are allegations against the Hon'ble Mr. Biswanath Das. It will take time to prepare to substantiate them properly. Moreover, there may be others, and I know there are some, who can be of use in this matter. It will be necessary to meet them all or as many of them as possible. If you think it proper, you may kindly fix some other time and I think that Cuttack will be the suitable place for this purpose.

I am sorry that I am not able to meet you as desired and hope to be excused.

Yours sincerely,

G. Misra

26. *From some scheduled caste members of the Congress Party in the U.P. Legislative Assembly to the Prime Minister, U.P., Lucknow*

Dear Sir,

We the undersigned scheduled caste members of the Congress Party in the U.P. Legislative Assembly respectfully beg to submit the following for your favourable consideration.

In the end of July '37, we waited on you and impressed the necessity of including a scheduled caste member in your Cabinet. But we are sorry to find that our request has not yet been acceded to, though we were told that if the Ministry continues for more than six months, the needful will be done.

We feel that the inclusion of [a] scheduled caste member in the Cabinet is the first step towards the amelioration of the conditions of our community. His appointment as a Minister, his reception by district officials and leading public men, when out on tour, will bring about the much needed psychological change



in the minds of the caste Hindus and others, and they will realise that there is no bar to our people occupying the highest office in the province; all this will result in a very desirable change in the treatment of the caste Hindus towards our people. We are convinced that unless this first step is taken, other actions of Government will be only half-hearted, as at present, as the Cabinet cannot be properly advised about affairs concerning our people.

In the course of your speech on the 17th of November 1938, winding up the general discussion on the Tenancy Bill, it was stated that in that Bill no provision was made for conferring any rights on sub-tenants (who chiefly belong to the scheduled castes) because the zamindars were opposed to it. This has made us very nervous and we feel that in all matters, including the appointment of a scheduled caste member in the Cabinet, our interests are being sacrificed to keep in good humour those zamindars who have been our oppressors, and the enemies of the country's freedom. We, therefore, most respectfully, but strongly beg to protest against this policy, which is against all accepted principles of the Congress, and beg to urge that sub-tenants of two years' standing should be given occupancy rights in respect of the land they cultivate.

We are further alarmed to hear from responsible members of the Congress Party, including a Whip, that after all Brahmins are Brahmins and the scheduled castes can never claim equality with them, that they will remain where they are; and that they should not have the audacity to think that one of them can be included in the Cabinet.

All this, coupled with the fact that nothing has so far been done to protect the civic rights of our people, makes us very doubtful about the intentions of the Government towards our people, so much so that we deem it a matter of urgent necessity to have one of us in the Cabinet in order that it may get proper advice in matters relating to our people's welfare, and may take proper action for levelling them up. As already pointed out, we consider this as the first and most essential step for ameliorating the lot of our community.

In the Provinces of Assam, Bihar and Madras the Congress Ministries have got three, one and one scheduled caste Ministers, respectively, although the population of our castes in each of these Provinces is proportionately much less. These considerations make us restless about the non-inclusion of a scheduled caste member in the U.P. Cabinet, especially when other interests have got more than their due share of representation.

We can say it with confidence, and with your authority, that there is no dearth of able men for inclusion in the Cabinet. We, therefore, hope that you will very kindly accede to our request at the earliest.

We also beg to state that appointment of any number of Special Officers cannot be a substitute for this, nor can it serve that purpose.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours sincerely,  
(Sd.)  
(12 persons)

Copy to Shri Rajendra Babu, Member, Parliamentary Sub-Committee, A.I.C.C., for information and favourable consideration.

*27. From Jaglal Choudhury to Prime Minister, Bihar*

CONFIDENTIAL

My dear Hon'ble Prime Minister,

Madras has introduced total prohibition in Salem and encouraged by the results thereof has resolved to extend the same to two more districts. U.P., C.P. and other Provinces also are following suit in very wide areas. But I see that my Province has failed to introduce total prohibition even in one district. We have not been able to convert our stills into distilleries, not to speak of prohibition either partial or complete. We are loath even to reduce the number of shops. Whenever I talk of any such thing the Finance Department comes in to interfere and the Hon'ble Finance Minister cannot see a way out of the difficulties.

The Congress is out for prohibition total and we the Ministers set up by the Congress have to carry on the policies [laid] down by the Congress. Mahatmaji when asking the Ministry to introduce prohibition was not unaware of the financial difficulties and he showed us the way how to face it. He asked us to use prisoners to increase the wealth of the country and make the jails self-supporting. He asked us to stop running colleges at Government cost and, by introducing handicrafts in primary schools, make the primary education self-supporting. By such means we could have saved enormous expenditure to allow us to make our Province dry within three years.

We have done nothing of the kind and the result has been that we cannot afford to lose more than ten lacs on account of prohibition this year. Even the loss of the ten lacs we are not going to incur in a right way. I was of opinion that we could make up the loss incurred in Saran district by simultaneously raising the price of intoxicants in the remaining districts. I was also of opinion that we could convert our stills into distilleries and also reduce the number of shops without incurring any loss in revenue, i.e., by demanding more licence fees from the shops that are settled. My opinions were not accepted on the plea that the Finance Secretary and the Excise Commissioner are expected to have better knowledge of these things than I. Well, if this be so we ought not to have accepted Ministry at all as late Ministers had certainly better experience of running the Government than we have. I certainly disagree with the plea set forth by the Hon'ble Finance Minister. I very strongly hold that the Finance Secretary and the Excise Commissioner have no experience at all of prohibition. They know how to make people drunk but they do not know at all how to make people give up drink. They fear illicit distillation and so open more shops while we ought to close shops and try to stop illicit distillation and sale. I have never worked in the Excise Department

but I know that [a] slight rise in the price of intoxicants will not deter a drunkard from drinking though Government revenue can be increased. On this principle we can introduce prohibition in one district without losing any revenue and can introduce prohibition in two or three districts by losing a very small fraction of previous revenue. I have also seen that a number of shops may be reduced without appreciably losing any revenue. The Excise Commissioner also says that by reducing sale hours in Jheria by one or two hours, Government revenue there will fall down by 75 thousand. This is beyond my comprehension. All the same I wanted to give a trial but the Hon'ble Finance Minister would not take the risk.

If, your honour, we are not bold enough to take such small risks I emphatically opine that we are not fit to hold the charge we are holding, and we should seriously consider whether we should make room for bolder comrades.

Herewith is attached copy of a letter from Jheria. This will tell you how Jheria people will feel when they will be told that we have been able to do nothing for them. I have with me similar letters from Ranchi and elsewhere and we shall be hurting them to the quick by our decision.

Will your honour take the advice of pujyavara Rajendra Babu on the matter?

Yours most sincerely,  
Jaglal Choudhury

Copy forwarded to Pujyavara Rajendra Prasadji.

Enclosure not included.

# APPENDICES

## PART I

1. *A letter from Godavarish Misra and others\**

Durgha Bazar  
Cuttack  
21/24 March 1938

Dear Sir,

You are probably aware of a difference among the Congress people of Orissa which has resulted in the formation of two Provincial Congress Committees. One of these two Provincial Committees has been recognised by the A.I.C.C. without an attempt to go into the causes that led to the formation of two such Committees. This has further aggravated the difference. It is now thought that matters have so far advanced that a critical situation has become imminent and will affect the prestige of the Congress and the Congress Ministry in the Province. That under the circumstances which the situation has helped to create a correct lead in accordance with the Congress pledge and principles is not being obtained from the Ministry will appear from an examination of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and facts connected therewith. Dignity in debate has been sacrificed by want of study and pains on the part of Ministers and irresponsible talk colloquially known as bluff. This has led to nine members of the Legislative Assembly belonging to the Congress Party submitting a memorandum to the leader of that Party which will give an idea of the situation. A copy of the memorandum is enclosed for reference.

We think that in order to have a correct estimation of the state of things as they have become it will be necessary to be acquainted with certain salient facts which have helped to bring about that state. This will necessitate going into some details which, like all details in which one is not directly concerned, are bound to appear uninteresting and, on the surface, to some extent even unnecessary. You will, we hope therefore, excuse us for referring to certain details in this letter. These details are as follows:

1. Early in the year 1937 Sriji Harekrushna Mahtab became elected as the President of the P.C.C., Utkal, by the majority of one vote, defeating Pandit Nilakantha Das, who had continued to be its President for several years and who, on the occasion of this defeat, had been absent at Delhi till immediately before the election. The latter, notwithstanding the fact that he had reasons to believe that he was deprived of the position as President of the P.C.C. by means that were not straightforward, carried into many parts of the Province his activities and the message of the Congress and of Mahatma Gandhi, which had just achieved for the Province as a whole the honour of being the first Province in India where, in the last elections to the legislatures, the Congress had secured a very decided majority. The result of these activities was the enrolling of a very large number of members in three out of the six districts of the Province, namely, Puri, Ganjam and Koraput, the last one being a backward district where the banner of the Congress had not flown before. The total number of members

enrolled in these districts was in the neighbourhood of 45,000. This unexpected result was achieved in spite of a ban imposed upon Pandit Nilakantha Das by the P.C.C., pending severer action which could not, however, be taken owing to resentment expressed by the D.C.C.s of Puri, Ganjam, Koraput and Sambalpur and popular disapproval.

2. When the information of the enrolment of such a large number of members in these three districts reached the office of the P.C.C., it was rather too late for enrolling members for the year. It was decidedly known that if a contest arose for the place of the President of the P.C.C. in the succeeding, i.e. the present year, the decision would go in favour of Pandit Nilakantha Das or his nominee, unless the number of members in three other districts of the Province was considerably increased. The last date fixed for the enrolment of members for the purpose of elections in 1937 was the 30th of September. During the whole of that month the Legislative Assembly was in session. Early in the month of October, i.e. after the expiry of the period within which enrolment of Congress members could be made, members of the Legislative Assembly, set free by this prorogation on the 30th September, went out to enlist members in the district of Cuttack. The result proved to be marvellous. The number of members enrolled in that district alone swelled into the unexpected figure of about 24,000, whereas the number in Balasore remained at 9,000 and that in Sambalpur at something below 4,000.

3. The position nevertheless mostly remained as it was before. The number of members in the three districts of Puri, Ganjam and Koraput was found still to be in excess of that in the three remaining districts, in spite of what may strictly be called manipulations made to swell it in the latter with a particular end in view. Pandit Nilakantha Das yet commanded a majority in his own or in his nominee's favour. Suspicion about fairness in the election of delegates to the Haripura Session of the Congress and, for the matter of that, of the members of the coming P.C.C. arose in the minds of many people, if the conducting of the election were left, as was usually the case, to the office-bearers of the P.C.C. This suspicion, created by various incidents which need not be mentioned here, was strengthened by the manner of enrolment of members in the district of Cuttack, referred to previously. Therefore contrary to general previous practice, according to which matters connected with election would be left to its office-bearers, the P.C.C. unanimously elected another person as Election Officer empowered to conduct the elections.

4. The dates for nomination, scrutiny of nominations and polling were fixed by the Working Committee of the P.C.C. The electoral rolls supplied and division of constituencies suggested by the various D.C.C.s were accepted by the office of the P.C.C. except, as anticipated, in respect of the one district, Ganjam, where the number of members enrolled necessitated the election of thirty-two members of the P.C.C. So far as that district was concerned, the office of the P.C.C., in preparing constituencies, took the help of persons like Srijut Niranjan Patnaik, who had long shaken off connection with the Congress and had even gone to the length of wearing foreign cloth, despite the list of constituencies

supplied by the D.C.C. under instructions from the P.C.C. A new list was thus prepared in the office of the P.C.C. apparently with a view to facilitate the election of persons like the said Srijut Niranjan Patnaik, shutting out those of the D.C.C. including its President and Secretary, who had sacrificed their all in order to establish the hold of the Congress in that district and had become immensely successful. It was suspected that the office-bearers of the P.C.C. intended to create a disruption in the district of Ganjam which would enable them to form a party of men in Ganjam who would support them in their actions.

5. The Working Committee of the P.C.C. had fixed 10.12.37 as the date of nomination. But the President of the P.C.C. changed it in respect of Ganjam alone to 15.12.37, saying that this extension was necessary owing to delay in the formation of constituencies for that district. An announcement in newspapers to that effect was made by him without the knowledge of the Election Officer. The latter, however, was made to agree to it later on. But when representation was made to him by D.C.C. of Ganjam he found out his mistake and corrected it by expressing the view that the date of nomination even in respect of Ganjam need not be extended.

6. The office-bearers of the P.C.C., feeling concerned at this view of the Election Officer, sought remedies. A situation was created in which the Election Officer decided to hear as arbiter what both parties had to say in each other's presence. This arbitration was attended by the President and Secretary of the P.C.C. and by the President and Secretary of the D.C.C. of Ganjam, besides a number of other gentlemen who keenly waited to see what the decision was going to be. Formalities like examinations in chief and cross-examinations obtaining in courts of law were gone through at the request of the parties, and statements were also signed. After considering what either party had stated the Election Officer gave his award saying that extension of the date of nomination in the case of Ganjam was not necessitated under the circumstances.

7. The office-bearers of the P.C.C. thereupon refused to cooperate with the Election Officer. This led to the kind intervention of friends which resulted in a signed agreement between the President of the P.C.C. and the Election Officer. It was not long before this agreement came to be disregarded by the office-bearers of the P.C.C. Protests were made before the Election Officer against his action and the President of the P.C.C. placed a ban on the President and Secretary of the D.C.C. of Ganjam.

8. While the elections were being arranged in Ganjam by the Returning Officer appointed for that district on the suggestion of the President of the P.C.C., the Secretary of the P.C.C. who went from Cuttack to that district without any obvious necessity, issued a notification cancelling the election so far as that district was concerned. The Returning Officer, an advocate of long-standing of the Patna High Court, and the President of the Municipal Board of Cuttack, nevertheless held, under instructions from the Election Officer, elections in that district, many of which in various constituencies were keenly contested. In one constituency for instance, in which Srijut Niranjan Patnaik was

one of the candidates, the fervour went so high that the ballot boxes and ballot papers were seized and destroyed by fire, as the Presiding Officer came to know, by agents working on behalf of Sriji Niranjan Patnaik. The Presiding Officer thereupon stopped the election in that constituency till another date fixed for the purpose.

9. The President of the P.C.C. subsequently approved the action of the Secretary of the P.C.C. cancelling the election in the district of Ganjam held by the Election Officer, appointed the said Secretary of the P.C.C. the Election Officer of Ganjam and got returned thirty-two delegates without election or contest. It is to be noted in this connection that the President of [the] P.C.C. issued certificates of habitually wearing khaddar in respect of candidates for election in Ganjam at least one of whom, Sriji Bipracharan Das, the brother of the Hon'ble Mr. Biswanath Das, the Chief Minister, was known to everybody to have never been a habitual khaddar wearer.

10. This situation, in particular, as well as every important situation before this was intimated to the President of the A.I.C.C., Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and to the office of the A.I.C.C. A requisition was also sent to the Secretary of [the] P.C.C. to convene a special meeting of the P.C.C. to consider the actions taken by its President and the Election Officer. But a meeting of the P.C.C. was not called, although the proper course would have been, if the Election Officer was not proceeding rightly, to get his action reprehended by the P.C.C. and to approve the action taken by its President and Secretary. This was specially necessary in view of the fact that the P.C.C. had entrusted to its unanimously elected Election Officer all matters connected with the election, in spite of the office-bearers of the P.C.C.

11. The Chief Minister, who had not by then been elected a delegate, because of the fact that his nomination was delivered by him to the President of the P.C.C. instead of to the Election Officer, as the rules required, and because of the fact that the President of the P.C.C. took no proper step for its transmission to the Election Officer, secured the presence of Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh from Calcutta for bringing about a settlement. After enquiries into the matter, Dr. Ghosh suggested certain measures which were not, unfortunately, permitted to materialise. One of these measures was that Sjt. Gopabandhu Chaudhury should be elected President of the P.C.C. This was very much appreciated. Pandit Nilakantha Das proposed his name at the meeting of the new P.C.C. But things suddenly took such an unexpected turn at the meeting that Sjt. Harekrushna Mahtab got elected in place of Sjt. Gopabandhu Chaudhury. This was done at a stage when many members, satisfied at the proposal of Sjt. Gopabandhu Chaudhury becoming the President, had left the meeting and could not therefore get an opportunity to speak out their desire or take part in voting.

12. This resulted in a division of the members of the P.C.C. into two committees. The one with Sjt. Harekrushna Mahtab was recognised by the A.I.C.C. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had advised that in connection with the election affairs disciplinary action should not be applied. Dr. Prafulla Chandra



Ghosh had also suggested that recourse to drastic action, such as taking of disciplinary measures, should not be taken. The President and [the] Secretary of the D.C.C., Ganjam, were nevertheless removed from the fold of the Congress by disciplinary action taken against them by the Committee presided [over] by Sj. Harekrushna Mahtab.

13. Partly on account of high-handedness and disciplinary measures and partly owing to mutual distrust, there is at present a complete cleavage in the Congress sphere in the Province. This is aggravated by the Congress Ministry supporting one group in their own interest. There appears to be a reciprocity between the two in the matter of serving their own causes. For instance, a weekly newspaper, called *Krusak*, started about a couple of months ago as the organ of the Kisan movement in the Province, is receiving patronage from the Ministers. This paper is believed to incite hatred amongst the tenantry towards a class of Congress workers who do not favour a separate Kisan movement being carried on in the Province as distinct from and, in some cases, antagonistic to the Congress.

14. At the incitement of some people calling themselves socialists, who are the promoters of the Kisan movement, people in some places are doing things unheard of before. In one place, an estate called Sukinda, the tenants have forcibly cut down about hundred thousand trees of their landlord. At that place a condition of lawlessness is now prevailing. The law is still taking its course, the result of which is to drag hundreds of innocent misguided ignorant people to courts for trial and to condemn them thereafter into imprisonment. There the prestige of the Congress has gone down very low.

15. Attempts are made to influence the action of law courts. For instance, when a socialist friend was being tried for having secretly molested the property of a landlord, Sj. Harekrushna Mahtab saw the trying magistrate with a view to mitigate, if possible, the effect of law on him. He also prevailed upon the Chief Minister to see the trying magistrate and do what might be necessary. In another instance a file containing the original papers of a trying court including order sheets was taken by the Chief Minister from Puri to Cuttack and placed for a certain purpose in the hands of the editor of a newspaper. In this case, involving a claim of a large sum of money, the Chief Minister is acting as mediator in his private capacity.

16. In certain cases there is reason to believe that steps are taken by the Ministry through the help of the police to get prosecuted and otherwise harass persons whom they wish to damage. If required, instances may be cited.

17. There is nevertheless a patent desire in the minds of the other Ministers to secure for them official support by means of parties and dinners given in honour of high European Officers on special occasions.

18. The P.C.C. has been provided with a building purchased in the name of Srijut Harekrushna Mahtab with money realised from contractors and persons benefited by Government. Two cases may specially be mentioned here. These are the cases of Mr. N.N. Sur and Mr. Gangji. The former had been dismissed by

Government several years ago for defrauding them. In that case some officers were also very seriously dealt with. He has now been reinstated. The latter's bill for dues from Government was passed by the departmental officers concerned for a certain amount. He has now been paid by the present Government more than double that amount. The house, purchased with money from sources such as these, will be opened as the office of the P.C.C., it is understood, by Mahatmaji during his ensuing visit to Orissa.

19. A Bill to control the Hindu religious endowments was introduced in the Legislative Assembly to fulfil a pledge given to the people at the last elections. The author of this Bill is a member of the Congress Party. The Bill has also been adopted as a Party measure. The Chief Minister showed unusual favour to it by agreeing to get it published in the Gazette before its introduction. In the drafting of the Bill several years ago he had a definite share. At that time it was introduced in the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council. The trustees of the endowment resorted to corrupt practices, as the debates of that Council show. The Bill did not succeed. Now when almost the same Bill is before the Legislative Assembly of Orissa, the Chief Minister is not taking a reasonable and favourable attitude. It is very difficult to believe that a person in the position of the Chief Minister of a Province could allow himself to be guided by any private considerations, which, in this case, are that the Chief Minister is the disciple of the trustee of a particular big endowment. This, as well as certain other actions, some of which have been referred to in [the] previous paragraphs, tends to damage the honesty and reputation of the Congress.

20. Besides this, generally speaking, Bills are being introduced and even passed without enquiry, without facts and figures, and without any attempt at enlightening the assembly as to the effect of such measures. Some of these are in their make-up tainted with the desire [for] personal benefit of one or other of the Ministers to the detriment of the interests of the people. In the Madras Estates Land Amendment Act, the benefit to the Chief Minister, who holds rayati lands to the extent of ten thousand acres, will bring the neighbourhood of Rs.20,000 per year. In the Select Committee a remedy for this abuse in general was sought by means of an amendment which the Chief Minister defeated with his casting vote. The opposition is weak and disorganised. The members of the Congress Party who could improve matters are not allowed to have their say under pain of penal action. These circumstances are gradually creating popular opinion against the Congress. The Press outside the Province, which looks at things from a distance, however, strikes a different note. It is understood that some amount of incorrect propaganda is being made in higher Congress and parliamentary circles, where the other side of the picture has not been put in the proper perspective.

It is just on the eve of a crisis that we are trying by this letter to draw your attention to certain facts which have remained concealed. We expect that some means would be adopted to smoothen and clarify the situation in a proper manner.

All those members of the P.C.C. who do not wish to be party to such improper courses of action are not here now. We send this letter in advance and the remaining members who are likely to subscribe to it can do so later when they may represent their views to you.

Yours truly,

1. Godavarish Misra
2. Sadasiba Tripathy
3. Radha Mohan Sahu
4. R.K. Biswasray
5. K.M. Mohanty
6. J.N. Rath
7. Raghunath Misra
8. Jagannath Mohanty
9. (*Illegible*)
10. Ghanshyam Dass
11. Golakbuhani Pande
12. Bhola Nath Mishra
13. Satyabadi Nanda
14. Lalbehan Das
15. Dibawan
16. (*Illegible*)
17. (*Illegible*)
18. (*Illegible*)
19. (*Illegible*)

\*Addressee not known.

Enclosure not included.

2. *Annual Report (for the year ending 31 March 1938) submitted by the Bombay Legislature Congress Party*

The Committee have the pleasure to submit the first Annual Report of the Party.

After the elections to the Bombay Legislative Assembly and Council a meeting of the members elected on the Congress ticket and others who had joined the Congress Party after the elections was called on 12th March 1937, at the Congress House, Bombay, *inter alia* to elect the Leader of the Party. Sjt. Mangaldas Pakwasa presided at the meeting and the meeting elected Sjt. B.G. Kher as its Leader.

The Party originally consisted of 85 members elected to the Assembly and 13 members elected to the Council on the Congress ticket. Sjt. Chakranarayan and Sjt. M. Y. Nurie joined the Party after their election and have signed the necessary

pledge. There was a further addition of two members as a result of by-elections. Sjt. Chandroji Patil was elected without a contest from the Satara Rural Constituency and Sjt. R.B. Wadekar was elected after a keen contest from the East Khandesh Rural Constituency. Sjt. T.M. Guldo was nominated to the Council and he, too, joined the Party and has signed its pledge. Sjt. Nalavadi signed the pledge on 31st March 1938. The Party therefore today consists of 90 members in the Assembly and 14 members in the Council.

The Constitution of the Party was adopted at its first meeting held at Vile-Parle on 19th and 20th June 1937. It has been printed and circulated among the members. The Leader then nominated the following office-bearers: Sjt. R.G. Soman as the Deputy Leader for the Council; Sjt. Nagindas T. Master and Sjt. Shantilal H. Shah as the Secretaries; Sjt. Bhawanji A. Khimji as Treasurer; Sjt. Morarji R. Desai as the Chief Whip; Mrs. Hansa Mehta as the Whip for the Council; and Sjts. L.M. Patil, K.B. Antrolikar and M.P. Patil as Whips for the Assembly. After the Party accepted office Mr. Antrolikar was appointed as the Chief Whip in place of Sjt. Morarji Desai, and Sjt. B.B. Potdar was appointed as the Whip in the Council in place of Smt. Hansa J. Mehta. There have been some other changes in the Whips. The Leader also appointed seven members to the Executive Committee. The names of the present office-bearers, members of the Executive Committee and Whips are given in Appendix 'A'

After his election the Leader undertook an extensive tour of Maharashtra and also visited some places in Karnataka and Gujarat. After acceptance of office the Ministers have been constantly touring in the Province and keeping in direct touch with the public.

While the Assembly is not in session, Bulletins are issued to keep the members informed of the work of the Party. The Party decided to form Study Groups and Local Grievances Committees have been set up but both these have not so far been able to function successfully and serve their purpose. It is very desirable that Standing Committees of not less than 3 and not more than 5 members should be formed to study different subjects pertaining to various departments of administration and legislation, to examine proposed legislative measures prepared by the Ministers and keep in touch with the Party and the Congress organisations in the Province. It is suggested that these Standing Committees should be constituted at the ensuing Annual General Meeting.

On 25th March 1937 the Governor invited the Leader to discuss the question of forming a Ministry but as the assurances demanded were not forthcoming, the Leader declined to take office and for some time the political atmosphere in the Province was very tense and uncertain. The Governor then appointed what is known as the interim Ministry.

When the interim Ministry was in power the Leader issued a statement signed by the Party members expressing their want of confidence in the interim Ministry. The following persons, though not members of the Party, signed the statement: Sjt. S.H. Jhabwalla, R.A. Khedgikar, G.R. Nalwadi, S.T. Patil, M.C. Ghia, M.Y. Nurie and Narasingh Rao Desai and Dr. K.A. Hamied.

cheered by the public and a welcome was given by the Sevikas who formed a guard of honour. After the members had been sworn in at the first sitting of the Assembly, "Vande Mataram" was sung in the House amidst scenes of great enthusiasm when all members of the House stood up. After the formation of the Ministry both the Assembly and the Council were prorogued and at the next session held in August the first Congress budget for the Province was presented and passed. At this session the Party made arrangements for the boarding and lodging of the members at 3 Queen's Gardens just near the Council Hall.

Several members of the Party have made donations to the Party fund for which thanks are due to the donors and to the Treasurer Sjt. Bhawanji A. Khimji who was mainly responsible for collecting the large donations. Thanks are also due to several members who have borne the expenses for providing refreshments at several Party meetings.

At the general meeting of the Party held on the 11th of December 1937 it was resolved that the subscription payable by a member, instead of being 1/10th of the allowance and/or salary, should be a consolidated contribution of Rs.6 per month for members, Rs.20 for the President, the Speaker and the Ministers and Rs.10 for the Deputy President, the Deputy Speaker and the Parliamentary Secretaries. It is a matter of regret that the subscriptions are not paid regularly by some members. The Committee trusts that in future subscriptions would be paid regularly so that there would not be large arrears and consequent inconvenience. Accounts for the year ending 31st March 1936 are appended.

During the year under report the discipline of the Party has been excellent and the members have shown exemplary team spirit and cooperation. A spirit of accommodation and goodwill has prevailed throughout and the Party has stood as a solid phalanx in the House whatever slight differences of opinion there may have been among the members themselves on the different subjects under consideration. The discipline of the Party has generally been a matter of admiration. The Leader takes this opportunity of congratulating the members on their high sense of discipline and thanks them for the splendid cooperation they have given and the full confidence they have placed in him and his colleagues. It cannot be expected that in any large Party or group every matter could be decided to the satisfaction of everyone concerned but with mutual goodwill and cooperation which members have shown, the Leader is confident that the Party has a bright future before it and will be able to do real good service to the country.

#### APPENDIX 'A'

Office-bearers of the Party:

Shri B.G. Kher—*Leader*

Shri R.G. Soman—*Deputy Leader*

Shri Nagindas T. Master—*Secretary*

Shri Shantilal H. Shah—*Secretary*

Shri Bhawanji A. Khimji—*Treasurer*

Shri K.B. Antrolkar—*Chief Whip*  
 Shri B.B. Potdar—*Whip for the Council*

Members of the Executive Committee:

Shri K.B. Deshmukh  
 Shri B.P. Thakore  
 Shri K.S. Firodea  
 Shri B.N. Jog  
 Shri H.V. Pataskar  
 Shri L.G. Patil

Whips for the Assembly:

Shri Waman Mukadam  
 Shri Vasant N. Naik  
 Shri G.H. Deshpande  
 Shri K.S. Patil  
 Shri S.K. Patil

APPENDIX 'B'

*Ministers*

Shri B.G. Kher	Political and Reforms, Education and Labour
Shri A.B. Latthe	Finance
Shri K.M. Munshi	Home and Law
Dr. M.D.D. Gildar	Health and Excise
Shri Morarji R. Desai	Revenue, Rural Development and Agriculture
Shri M.Y. Nurie	Public Works
Shri L.M. Patil	Local Self Government and Miscellaneous

*Parliamentary Secretaries*

Smt. Hansa Jivraj Mehta	Education; with the Premier
Shri Gulzari Lal Nanda	Labour; with the Premier
Shri B.S. Hiray	Home and Law; with Sjt. K.M. Munshi
Shri M.D. Patil	Revenue, Rural Development and Agriculture; with Sjt. Morarji Desai
Shri T.R. Nesvi	Public Works; with Sjt. M.Y. Nurie
Shri B.M. Gupta	Local Self-Government and miscel- laneous; with Sjt. L.M. Patil

## APPENDIX 'C'

## Public Accounts Committee:

1. Shri A.B. Latthe
2. Shri B.D. Lala
3. Shri S.K. Patil
4. Shri K.S. Firodea
5. Shri V.N. Jog
6. Shri B.R. Rare

## Backward Class Board:

1. Shri H.J. Shinde
2. Shri P.L. Chawan
3. Shri K.R. Talkar
4. Shri S.G. Songaonkar
5. Shri B.U. Waghela
6. Shri M.G. Bhosle
7. Shri L.M. Shrikant

## Local Advisory Committee for Railways:

1. Shri B.A. Khimji for the G.I.P. Rly.
2. Shri W.S. Mukadam for the B.B. and C.I. Rly.
3. Shri G.R. Nalvadi for the M. and S.M. Rly.

## Senate of the Bombay University:

1. Smt. Lilavati K. Munshi
2. Shri K.D. Kunte
3. Shri D.N. Desai

## British Empire Leprosy Relief Association (Indian Council):

Dr. C.J. Ghia

*The Balance Sheet of the Bombay Legislative Congress Party as on  
31st March 1938*

Credits	Debits	
Party Fund	Rs.2,485-13-0 Mr. K. Srinivasan's A/c (Directory advance)	Rs. 100-0-0
Subscriptions received in advance	Rs. 310-0-0 Deficit of Income and Expenditure A/c The Bombay Provincial Cooperative Bank A/c Cash Balance	Rs. 293-8-3 Rs. 2,152-1-0 Rs. 245-3-9
	<hr/> Rs.2,795-13-0	<hr/> Rs.2,795-13-0

NAGINDAS T. MASTER  
SHANTILAL H. SHAH  
Secretaries

BHAWANJI A. KHIMJI  
Treasurer

*The Statement of Income and Expenditure of the Bombay Legislature Congress  
Party from 25.3.1937 to 31.3.1938*

Income		Expenditure	
Subscriptions received from members	Rs.5,909-3-0	Post and telegram expenses	Rs.450-11-6
		Printing and stationery expenses	Rs.377-9-3
Deficit	Rs. 298-8-3	Travelling expenses	Rs.575-6-0
		Conveyance expenses	Rs. 94-12-0
		Books and periodicals expenses	Rs.327-13-3
		Office equipment expenses	Rs.714-5-6
		Salaries and wages expenses	Rs.2,545-12-9
		Rent expenses	Rs.450-0-0
		Party meeting expenses	Rs.213-14-0
		Boarding and lodging expenses	Rs.136-12-0
		Miscellaneous expenses	Rs.321-0-6
	<hr/> Rs.6,207-11-3		<hr/> Rs.6,207-11-3

NAGINDAS T. MASTER  
SHANTILAL H. SHAH  
Secretaries

BHAWANJI A. KHIMJI  
Treasurer

*3. Resolution passed by the Working Committee of Jamiat-ul-Mominin asking  
for inclusion of a representative of the Momins in the Bihar Cabinet*

An emergent meeting of the Working Committee of Jamiat-ul-Mominin, Biharsharif, was held on the 4th of May 1938 under the Presidentship of Moulvi Md. Ali Karim, Municipal Commissioner, Biharsharif, to consider the position of the Momin community under the Bihar Congress Government.

The following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

1. That in spite of the fact that the Momins form about two-thirds of the Mohammadan population of the Bihar Province and about half of the Muslims in India, yet they have got no representatives of their own in the Bihar Cabinet for the protection and safeguard of their own interests, and for the development of the hand-weaving and other cottage industries which form the principal source of



their maintenance; it is therefore resolved that the Congress Government be requested to take one of their representatives in the cabinet with the portfolio of Textile and other cottage industries including unemployment (sic).

2. That as the hand-weavers are starving owing to the destruction of hand-weaving and other cottage industries, and also because worklessness is fast increasing both among the industrialists, and the educated people; it is therefore resolved that the Congress Government be requested to reshuffle the above portfolio as early as possible.

3. That according to the assurance given by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru by his letter No. E 26/2644 dated July 16th. 1937 running as follows:

I should like to assure you that we are fully aware of the importance of the Momin community and we shall gladly do everything in our power to help it.

It is resolved that the Congress Government be requested to fulfil and honour the above pledge given by the All India Congress President.

4. Resolved further that the Bihar Congress Government be requested not to disappoint the Muslims and make them discontented by depriving them of their share in the administration of the Province especially when they have provided most efficient members to the Legislative Assembly including a specialist in the Industrial Administration and some of whom have joined the Congress Party in the Legislature.

5. Resolved that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the Bihar Congress Government and the Press.

#### *4. Correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and Mohammad Ali Jinnah and between Jawaharlal Nehru and Mohammad Ali Jinnah*

Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, President of the All India Muslim League, has now officially released the full correspondence between him and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in certain newspapers. He wired to Mahatma Gandhi on 14th June as follows:

PUBLICATION OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN PANDIT JAWAHARLAL AND MYSELF IS A BREACH OF CONFIDENCE IT SEEMS THAT THE LEAKAGE IS FROM CONGRESS CIRCLES I MUST RELEASE FULLY NOW YOUR CORRESPONDENCE ALONG WITH THE REST HOPE YOU AGREE

JINNAH

Mr. Jinnah received the following reply from Mahatma Gandhi on June 15th:

I AM SURE THAT THE PUBLICATION WAS UNAUTHORISED BUT YOU MAY  
PUBLISH OUR CORRESPONDENCE

GANDHI

*Correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and Mohammad Ali Jinnah*

(Copy of letter from Mahatma Gandhi to M.A. Jinnah, dated Segaon,  
Wardha, the 19th October 1937)

Dear Friend,

I carefully went through your speech at Lucknow and I felt deeply hurt over your misunderstanding of my attitude. My letter was in answer to a specially private message you had sent to me. It represented my deepest feeling. The letter was purely personal. Were you right in using it as you did?

Of course, as I read it, the whole of your speech is a declaration of war. Only I had hoped you would reserve poor me as a bridge between the two. I see that you want no bridge. I am sorry. Only it takes two to make a quarrel. You won't find me one even if I cannot become a peacemaker.

This is not for publication unless you desire it. It is written in all good faith and out of an anguished heart.

Yours sincerely,  
M.K. Gandhi

(Copy of letter from Mr. Jinnah to Mahatma Gandhi, dated Bombay, the  
5th November 1937)

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I have received your letter dated 19th October 1937 on my arrival here.

As regards publishing your letter from Tethal last May, I am of opinion that I was fully justified in doing so; but your letter means something different from what I understand it to mean. Surely it was open to you to offer your explanation to the public. The letter was not marked as it is usual to do so when its publication is not desired by the writer, and my message to you was not private. Even now you do not indicate how I have misunderstood your attitude or the contents of that letter. You merely say: "I felt deeply hurt over your misunderstanding my attitude."

I am sorry you think my speech at Lucknow is a declaration of war. It is purely

in self-defence. Kindly read it again and try and understand it. Evidently you have not been following the course of events of the last twelve months.

As to reserving you as a "bridge" and "peacemaker", don't you think your complete silence for all these months has identified you with the Congress leadership, although I know that you are not even a four-anna member of the body?

In conclusion I regret to say that I find nothing definite or any constructive proposal in your letter under reply, except that it is written in all good faith and out of an anguished heart, which I reciprocate.

Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Jinnah

(Copy of letter from Mahatma Gandhi to Mr. Jinnah, dated Segaon, Wardha, the 3rd February 1938)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru told me yesterday that you were complaining to the Maulana Sahib about the absence of any reply from me to your letter of 5th November in reply to one of 19th October. The letter was received by me when I was pronounced by the doctors to be seriously ill in Calcutta. The letter was shown to me three days after its receipt. Had I thought it necessarily called for a reply, even though I was ill, I would have sent one. I have re-read the letter. I still think that there was nothing useful that I could have said in reply. But, in a way, I am glad that you awaited a reply. Here it is.

Mr. Kher told me definitely that he had a private message from you. He delivered it to me when I was alone. I could have sent you a verbal message in reply, but in order to give you a true picture of my mental state I sent you the short note. There was nothing to hide in it. But I did feel, as I still do, that the way in which you used it came upon me as a painful surprise.

You complain of my silence. The reason for my silence is literally and truly in my note. Believe me, the moment I can do something that can bring the two communities together, nothing in the world can prevent me from so doing.

You seem to deny that your speech was a declaration of war, but your later pronouncement too confirm the first impression. How can I prove what is a matter of feeling? In your speeches I miss the old nationalist. When in 1915 I returned from the self-imposed exile in South Africa everybody spoke of you as one of the staunchest of nationalists and the hope of both Hindus and Musalmans. Are you still the same Mr. Jinnah? If you say you are, in spite of your speeches, I shall accept your word.

Lastly, you want me to come forward with some proposal. What proposal can I make except to ask you on bended knees to be what I had thought you were. But the proposal to form a basis of unity between the two communities has surely got to come from you.

This is again not for publication, but for your eyes. It is the cry of a friend, not of an opponent.

Yours sincerely,  
M.K. Gandhi

(Copy of letter from Mr. Jinnah to Mahatma Gandhi, dated New Delhi, the 15th February 1938)

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I have received your letter of the 3rd February 1938 which was redirected here. I did not complain to the Maulana Sahib about the absence of any reply from you. I only mentioned the facts as he was anxious that we two should meet. Anyhow, I am glad to hear from you. My message to you through Mr. Kher, as I informed you in my last letter, was not private. It was only when Mr. Kher went to see you at Wardha that I did say that he should not mention the matter to anyone except you and that if you yourself were inclined in the first instance to take up the matter, then it will be more than half the battle won. On his return to Bombay Mr. Kher told me that it was difficult for you to give a reply as you were restricted not to disclose it to anyone or consult anybody else.

Thereupon I said that it was not intended to be a secret and that he was free and you were free to put your heads together and let me know whether at that juncture you were inclined to take up this matter with your powerful and overwhelming influence which you exercise over the Congress. Then he saw you again at Tethal and from that moment it ceased to be a private matter between two individuals: and he brought me your reply in writing which I had to publish because, you know of the controversy between me and Babu Rajendra Prasad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the Press where it was sought to make out that I was putting every obstacle in the way of Hindu-Muslim settlement. As your letter was not marked confidential I used it. Besides, what is wrong in my saying that I had approached you on my own accord and that was a reply I received from you. I cannot understand why you feel so much about it. You say that I complained of your silence. Well, I do. But you further proceed to say, "Believe me, the moment I can do something that can bring the two communities together, nothing in the world can prevent me from so doing." Now, what am I to gather from this? Am I right in interpreting that the moment is not come?

With regard to your opinion that my speech at the Lucknow session and my later pronouncements, which you are pleased to call a declaration of war, I can only repeat that it is in self-defence. Evidently you are not acquainted with what is going on in the Congress Press: the amount of vilification, misrepresentation and falsehood that is daily spread about me—otherwise, I am sure, you would not blame me.

With regard to your saying that when in 1915 you returned from South Africa everybody spoke of me as one of the staunchest of nationalists and the hope of both the Hindus and Musalmans, and you ask me a question, "Are you still the

same Mr. Jinnah?" and proceed further to say, "If you say you are, in spite of your speeches, I shall accept your word." And you say that in my speeches you miss the old nationalist. Do you think that you are justified in saying that? I would not like to say what people spoke of you in 1915 and what they speak and think of you today. Nationalism is not the monopoly of any single individual; and in these days it is very difficult to define it; but I don't wish to pursue this line of controversy any further.

You conclude by saying: "Lastly, you want me to come forward with some proposal. What proposal can I make except to ask you on bended knees to be what I had thought you were. But the proposal to form a basis of unity between the two communities has surely got to come from you." I think you might have spared your appeal and need not have preached to me on your bended knees to be what you had thought I was. As regards the formation of proposals which would form the basis of unity, do you think that this can be done by correspondence? Surely you know as much as I do what are the fundamental points in dispute. In my opinion it is as much up to you to suggest ways and means of tackling the problem. If you genuinely and sincerely desire and you feel that the moment has come for you to step in and with your position and influence you are prepared to take the matter up earnestly, I will not fail to render all the assistance I can.

Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Jinnah

(Copy of letter from Mahatma Gandhi to Mr. Jinnah, dated Segaon, Wardha, the 24th February 1938)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

I thank you for your letter. I have read your letter to Jawaharlal also. I observe that both the letters invite not written replies but a personal discussion. I do not know whether it will take place in the first instance between you and Jawaharlal or, now that Subhas Bose succeeds him, between you and the latter. If you desire that before this there should be a talk between you and me, I would be delighted to see you in Segaon any time which is convenient to you before the 10th of March after which, if health permits, I might have to go to Bengal. So far as I am concerned, just as on the Hindu-Muslim question I was guided by Dr. Ansari, now that he is no more in our midst I have accepted Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as my guide. My suggestion, therefore, to you is that conversation should be opened in the first instance as between you and the Maulana Sahib. But in every case regard me as at your disposal.

Yours sincerely,  
M.K. Gandhi

(Copy of letter from Mr. Jinnah to Mahatma Gandhi, dated New Delhi, the 3rd March 1938)

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I have received your letter of the 24th February 1938. I am sorry for the delay in replying as I was not well. In your letter I missed the note of response, first whether you are of opinion that you see light now and the moment has come, and secondly, if so, whether you are prepared to take the matter up in right earnest, and thirdly, I find that there is no change in your attitude and mentality when you say you would be guided by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as Dr. Ansari is no more. If you pursue this line you will be repeating the same tragedy as you did when you expressed your helplessness because Dr. Ansari, holding pronounced and diehard views, did not agree, and you had to say that although you were willing, but what could you do? This happened, as you know, before you went to the Round Table Conference. At the Round Table Conference the tragedy was repeated by you when you seemed to be willing to accept provisionally certain terms; but you there also expressed that you are helpless as the Hindus were unwilling and you, as a representative of the Congress, would have no objection if the Hindus and Mussalmans came to an agreement.

We have reached a stage when no doubt should be left that you recognise the All-India Muslim League as the one authoritative and representative organisation of the Mussalmans of India and on the other hand you represent the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country. It is only on that basis that we can proceed further and devise [a] machinery of approach.

Of course, I shall be glad to see you, although I shall be equally glad to see Pandit Jawaharlal or Mr. Bose, as you may desire. The matter as you know will not be clinched without reference again to you by either of them. Therefore, I will prefer to see you first. In any case, I am sorry to say that I cannot come to Segaoon to see you before the 10th March. I have to go to Bombay and also I have fixed various other engagements of my tour. But we can fix up the time and place that may suit us both.

Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Jinnah

(Copy of letter from Mahatma Gandhi to Mr. Jinnah, dated Segaoon, Wardha, the 8th March 1938)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

I thank you for your letter. I hope you have completely got over your indisposition.

Your letter revives painful memories. I will not discuss at this stage, at any rate, the various debatable points raised in your letter. Suffice it to say that I am at your disposal. If you cannot come to Segaoon, and my health permits, I will gladly

go to Bombay to meet you when you are there. At present I have to go to Bengal and then for a while to Orissa. This will take me through the whole of this month. The earliest, therefore, that we can meet will be in April. Two questions arising from your letter demand a reply. You ask me whether I have now seen the light. Much to my regret I have to say "no". If I had, I would proclaim the news from the house-tops. But that limitation does not debar me from taking advantage of the slightest opportunity of finding a way out of the present difficulty.

You expect me to be able to speak on behalf of "the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country". I am afraid I cannot fulfil the test. I cannot represent either the Congress or the Hindus in the sense you mean. But I would exert to the utmost all the moral influence I could have with them in order to secure an honourable settlement.

Yours sincerely,  
M.K. Gandhi

(Copy of letter from Mr. Jinnah to Mahatma Gandhi, dated New Delhi, the 17th March 1938)

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 8th March and I thank you for it. As you do not wish to discuss the various points mentioned in my letter and the two questions which you have answered are far from hopeful. I am helpless.

However, as you say, "suffice it to say that I am at your disposal". I gather, you would nevertheless like to take "advantage of the slightest opportunity of finding a way out of the present difficulty." In these circumstances, I beg to inform you that I shall be glad to see you in Bombay some time in April, as suggested by you.

Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Jinnah

(Copy of letter from Mahatma Gandhi to Mr. Jinnah, dated Calcutta, the 24th March 1938)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Many thanks for your note. As soon as I reach Segaon I shall seek the first opportunity of waiting on you in Bombay.

Yours sincerely,  
M.K. Gandhi

(Copy of letter from Mr. Jinnah to Mahatma Gandhi, dated New Delhi, the 26th March 1938)

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I thank you for your letter of the 24th March 1938 and I shall be very glad to see you after my return from Calcutta about the 25th of April at Bombay.

Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Jinnah

(Copy of telegram from Mahatma Gandhi to Mr. Jinnah, dated Delhi, the 15th April 1938)

IF ON RETURN BOMBAY YOU CAN BREAK JOURNEY AT WARDHA FOR ONE DAY YOU WILL SPARE ME THE STRAIN OF UNDERTAKING THE JOURNEY TO BOMBAY I NEED SOME UNINTERRUPTED PHYSICAL REST IF POSSIBLE IN ANY EVENT COULD MAULANA AZAD ACCOMPANY ME AT THE INTERVIEW PLEASE WIRE WARDHA WHICH REACHING TOMORROW

(Copy of telegram from Mr. Jinnah to Mahatma Gandhi, dated Calcutta, the 16th April 1938)

EXTREMELY SORRY UNABLE CHANGE PROGRAMME NOW WILL RECEIVE YOU AT BOMBAY ON 25TH OR THEREAFTER AS ARRANGED WOULD PREFER TO SEE YOU ALONE

(Copy of telegram from Mahatma Gandhi to Mr. Jinnah, dated Wardha, the 18th April 1938)

THANKS 25TH HAPPENS TO BE MONDAY WILL REACH BOMBAY 28TH IF NOT INCONVENIENT

(Copy of telegram from Mr. Jinnah to Mahatma Gandhi, dated Calcutta, the 19th April 1938)

THANKS WILL GLADLY RECEIVE YOU ON 28TH AT MY HOUSE WIRE TIME CARE OF ISPAHANI CALCUTTA

(Copy of telegram from Mahatma Gandhi to Mr. Jinnah, dated Wardha, the 20th April 1938)

IF NOT INCONVENIENT WOULD LIKE TO REACH YOUR HOUSE AT 11.30 AM

*Correspondence between Jawaharlal Nehru and M.A. Jinnah*

(Copy of letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to M.A. Jinnah, dated Lucknow, the 18th January 1938)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

I have read the statement you issued recently to the Press with care. I am afraid we approach the question from differing viewpoints and I feel that your approach is not very helpful. But I entirely agree with you that an argument carried on through the medium of the Press is not desirable. Indeed, I had decided not to issue Press statements on the subject, but after your Calcutta



speech, in which you mentioned my name and issued some kind of a 'challenge' to me, I felt that a public statement was unavoidable. Hence my statement, in which I tried to avoid unnecessary controversy.

You know perhaps that for some months past I have been in correspondence with Nawab Ismail Khan on this subject and I have been anxious to find out what the points of difference and agreement were. I am afraid I do not know this yet and your last statement does not help. I would feel grateful to you if you could kindly throw some light on this and let me know what exactly are the points in dispute which require consideration. I think this will help us all and lead to an avoidance of needless controversy. We can then come to grips with the subject. As I have said in my last statement, we are eager to do everything in our power to put an end to every misapprehension and to endeavour to solve every problem that comes in the way of our developing our public life along right lines and promoting the unity and progress of the Indian people.

I am leaving for Lahore today. From there I go to the Frontier Province and return to Allahabad in about ten days' time. Kindly address your reply to Allahabad.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

(Copy of letter from M.A. Jinnah to Jawaharlal Nehru, dated Bombay, the 25th January 1938)

Dear Pandit Jawaharlal,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 18th January 1938. I must say that it is very difficult for me to understand it. I fail to see what you are driving at. It does not suggest any useful proposal of a concrete character, besides (sic) me and inform me that "we approach the question from differing viewpoints", and you further say, "I feel that your approach is not very helpful." You further refer to my Calcutta speech and say, "in which you mentioned my name and issued some kind of a 'challenge' to me. I felt that a public statement was unavoidable and hence my statement." But you do not even now give me the purport of my speech, and what was the 'challenge' which compelled you to say what you did in your statement which you considered unavoidable.

I know nothing about your being in correspondence with Nawab Ismail Khan referred to in your letter.

Finally I note your request that I should let you know "what exactly are the points in dispute which require consideration." I am glad that you agree with me that the arguments carried on through the medium of the Press are not desirable. But do you now think that this matter can be discussed, much less solved, by and through correspondence? I am afraid that is equally undesirable.

I may state for your information that I received a letter from Mr. Gandhi dated the 19th October 1937, and I replied to him on the 5th November 1937, and I am

still waiting to hear from him. I reciprocate the sentiments expressed in the last but one paragraph of your letter at the end of it.

Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Jinnah

(Copy of letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to M.A. Jinnah, dated Wardha, the 4th February 1938)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Your letter of the 25th January reached Allahabad on February 1st after I had left. It has been forwarded to me here and reached me yesterday.

I am sorry that my previous letter was difficult to understand. My purpose in writing it was, as I stated, to find out what our points of difference and agreement were. Presumably there are points of difference as you have repeatedly criticised the Congress policy and practice. If these points of difference are noted down and our attention drawn to them it would make their consideration easier. It is possible that some of them may be due to misapprehension and this misapprehension might be removed; it is equally possible that some are more fundamental and then we could try to find a way out or, at any rate, know exactly how and where we stand. When there is a conflict of opinion, a clarification of the opposing opinions is an essential preliminary to their consideration.

I might mention some relatively minor matters which have apparently led to misapprehension. In one of your speeches you referred to being told by someone that a cheque for rupees five lakhs was recently given to the Congress. I am not aware of this and presumably I ought to know. Indeed, to my knowledge, no one has given even a cheque for Rs.5,000 to the Congress for a considerable time.

In the same, or possibly another, speech you referred to the non-cooperation days and stated that while the Aligarh University was forced to close down and many non-cooperated from it, not a single student non-cooperated from the Benares University. As a matter of fact, a very large number of students did non-cooperate from the Benares University. As a result of this a non-official university, the Kashi Vidyapith, was established in Benares, as also the Gandhi Ashram. Both these still exist. In the same way the Jamia Millia came into existence in Aligarh and this now flourishes in Delhi.

You have referred in your speeches to the Congress imposing Hindi-Hindustani and trying to crush Urdu. I presume you were misinformed for I am not aware of any attempt on the part of the Congress to injure Urdu. Some time back I wrote an essay on "The Question of Language", which represents, I believe, the Congress viewpoint. It was approved by Mr. Gandhi and by many people unconnected with the Congress and interested in the advancement of Urdu, including Maulvi Abdul Haq, Secretary, Anjuman-e-Taraqqe-e-Urdu of Hyderabad. I do not know if you have come across this essay. In any event, I am asking my office in Allahabad to send you a copy. If you disagree with the argument or conclusions of this essay, I shall be grateful to have your criticisms.

I might mention that the Congress Ministry in Madras is endeavouring to introduce the study of Hindustani in the State schools in the Province. They are having primers and textbooks prepared especially for the purpose by the Jamia Millia. These primers etc. are to be in two scripts—Devanagri and Urdu—but in identical language, the students having the option of script.

I mention these instances to show how misapprehensions arise. But the real questions at issue are more important and it is in regard to these that clarification is necessary. I presume you are acquainted with the Congress resolutions and statements of minority and fundamental rights and regarding communal questions. If you wish it, I can have these sent to you. Many of these were collected together in a comprehensive resolution passed by the Working Committee in Calcutta towards the end of October 1937. About the Communal Award the Congress position has been repeatedly made clear.

The Congress policy as laid down in these resolutions may be incomplete or wrong. If so, we shall gladly consider suggestions to complete it or rectify it. Personally, I do not see what more can be done by the Congress regarding religious or cultural matters. As for political (communal) questions, the Communal Award, unsatisfactory as it is, holds the field for the present and till such time as it may be altered by mutual agreement of the parties concerned.

In considering wider political questions, the Congress has adhered to certain principles and policies for a number of years, though minor variations have taken place from time to time. Our present policy in the legislature and outside was defined by a comprehensive resolution passed by the Working Committee at Wardha last year. I am very glad to find from Nawab Ismail Khan and Choudhury Khaliqzaman that the U.P. Muslim League, or the U.P. Muslim League Parliamentary Board, accepted this programme. This included our objective of independence, our demand for a Constituent Assembly, our general attitude to the Constitution Act, and the Federation, and our methods of work inside and outside the legislature. It referred also to our agrarian and labour programmes. Thus, there appeared to be a very large measure of agreement between us not only in regard to fundamentals, but even regarding many details.

In view of this agreement it distressed and surprised me to find that there was so much conflict. I have tried therefore to find out what this conflict is about. I do not see how I can make any proposal, concrete or vague, when I do not know what the points in issue are. It is true that in reading your speeches I have come across various statements to the effect that the Congress is trying to establish Hindu Raj. I am unaware of how this is being done or who is doing it. If any Congress Ministries or the Congress organisation have made mistakes, these should be pointed out to us.

A report of your Calcutta speech appeared in the newspapers at the time and is no doubt available to you and for me to give you a purport of it seemed hardly necessary. In this you state that you are fighting the Congress, that you are fighting the Congress leadership which is misleading the Hindus. Further you have said that you want to bring the Congress High Command to its senses. May

I suggest that those who are privileged to advise or lead the Congress have no desire to fight anybody except British Imperialism? In any event, if we mislead or misbehave we have a right to enquire from our critics where and how we have done so.

Further, in your Calcutta speech you said: "I have long long ago, months ago now, thrown out a challenge to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and I throw out a challenge now,—let him come and sit with us and let us formulate a constructive programme which will have immediate relief to the poor." It was to this 'challenge' that I referred in my last letter. I do not remember on which previous occasion you had issued a similar challenge to me.

It is always helpful to discuss matters and problems face to face and, as I have said previously, we are always glad to do so. A short while ago you met Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, one of our most respected leaders than whom there is no one better fitted to explain the Congress viewpoint in regard to the minorities problem or any other matter. Whenever necessity arises every one of us will willingly welcome a talk. But even such a talk is likely to be vague and infructuous if some clarification of ideas does not take place previously. Correspondence helps in this process and sometimes is even preferable as it is more precise than talk. I trust, therefore, that you will help in clarifying the position by telling us where we differ and how you would like this difference to end. You have also criticised the Congress in vigorous language, as you were no doubt entitled to do. But are we not entitled to ask you to substantiate those criticisms in private at least, if not in public?

I have inquired from Mr. Gandhi about your letter to him dated the 5th November 1937. He received it in Calcutta when he was lying ill there and he felt that it needed no answer. Your letter had been in answer to his and the matter seemed to end there for the time being. He was good enough to show me his letter and yours and it seemed to me that no particular reply was called for. I understand that he wrote to you yesterday.

I hope to be in Allahabad by the 9th February.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

(Copy of letter from M.A. Jinnah to Jawaharlal Nehru, dated New Delhi, the 17th February 1938)

Dear Pandit Jawaharlal,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 4th February. You have now flung at me more complaints and grievances of trifling character. Evidently you rely on that section of the Press which is bent on misrepresenting and vilifying me, but I am glad that you say I mention these instances to show how misapprehension arises; "but the real question at issue is more important and it is in regard to this that clarification is necessary". Therefore I don't think any useful purpose will be served to carry on correspondence with regard to the various matters mentioned

in your letter. You will please not introduce matters which you may have discussed with Nawab Ismail Khan or Choudhury Khaliquzzaman or anybody else. These again will lead to references and cross-references and the matter will never end.

As regards my Calcutta speech, the word 'challenge' is obviously due to the imagination of the reporter for the very context shows clearly that it was an invitation. However, the discussion of all these matters in correspondence will lead us nowhere. I do not believe in the doctrine which you lay down: "But are we not entitled to ask you to substantiate all these criticisms in private at least, if not in public?" I for my part make no such distinction. I am prepared to substantiate anything that I have said publicly, provided it is correctly reported. The crux of your letter on the real vital point of the Hindu-Muslim unity is repetition of what you said in your previous letter, namely, that you want me to note down "the points of difference" and discuss them through and by correspondence—a method which I made it clear, in my last letter, is highly undesirable and most inappropriate. I welcome your suggestion when you say "whenever necessity arises every one of us would willingly welcome a talk". If you think that necessity has arisen and anyone of you is willing, I shall be glad to see you and equally welcome to talk. The thing is that you prefer talking at each other whereas I prefer talking to each other. Surely you know and you ought to know what are the fundamental points in dispute.

*I have received a letter from Mr. Gandhi and have replied to him, a copy of which I am enclosing herewith.*

Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Jinnah

(Copy of letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to M.A. Jinnah, dated Bombay, the 25th February 1938)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Your letter of the 17th February reached me at Haripura. I had no intention flinging any complaints and grievances at you. In my attempt to find out what your complaints were, I read your speeches as reported in the newspapers (usually by a news agency) and noted down some of the points on which you had laid stress. I am glad to know that you have been misrepresented but you have not pointed out where the misrepresentation comes in nor, so far as I know, have you issued any statement to the Press correcting the misrepresentation. May I suggest that it will be worthwhile to correct these errors so that the public might not be misled? A clear and authoritative statement from you will help us also in understanding what you stand for and what you object to.

I note that you do not wish to introduce in our coresspondence any matters which we may have discussed with Nawab Ismail Khan or Choudhury Khaliquzzaman. I did not know that they represented any different viewpoints from yours. I thought it necessary to draw your attention to the repeated

attempts I have been making to find out what the political and communal policy of the Muslim League is and wherein it differs from that of the Congress. You will remember saying last year that the Muslim League had an entirely different policy even on political matters from that of the Congress. Since then the League has changed its objective and its economic outlook and has thus approached nearer to the Congress. I am anxious to find out what the real meaning of these changes is. Without this clarification it is difficult for us to understand the present position.

You say that you do not believe in the doctrine that I lay down, namely, "But are we not entitled to ask you to substantiate all these criticisms in private at least, if not in public?" Further, you say that for your part you make no such distinction and are prepared to substantiate anything that you have said publicly, provided it is correctly reported. If you will read my sentence again, you will no doubt observe that I have nowhere laid down any such doctrine as you imagine. I would indeed welcome a public treatment by you of the criticisms made by you. But if you yourselves are unwilling to write to the Press on the subject, as you indicate in your letter, I put it to you that we are at least entitled to request you to substantiate the criticism in private.

If you have made no criticisms of the Congress, and the Press reports are entirely wrong, then, of course, no question of substantiation arises. All that need be done is to contradict the Press reports. But if the criticisms have been made, as presumably they have been, then I request you to justify them publicly or privately as you might choose. Personally I would prefer the former method.

I am afraid I must confess that I do not yet know what the fundamental points of dispute are. It is for this reason that I have been requesting you to clarify them. So far, I have not received any help in this direction. Of course, we shall willingly meet you whenever opportunity arises. Our President, Subhas Chandra Bose, or Maulana Azad or I or any other member of the Working Committee can meet you at a suitable opportunity.

But when we meet, what are we to discuss? Responsible people with organisations behind them can hardly discuss anything in the air. Some clarification of the issues, some clear statement of what is wanted and what is objected to, is always desirable; otherwise, we may not come to grips with the subject. You will remember the argument about what transpired at Delhi in 1936 between you and Babu Rajendra Prasad. There has even been a difference of opinion about the facts. It would be unfortunate if we repeated this performance and then argued about it later.

It is then highly desirable for us to define the issues first. This is also necessary as we may have always to consult many colleagues in regard to any matter affecting Congress policy. There is surely nothing undesirable or inappropriate about this defining of issues by correspondence. It is the usual method adopted between individuals and organisations. May I, therefore, beg of you to enlighten me?

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

(Copy of letter from M.A. Jinnah to Jawaharlal Nehru, dated New Delhi,  
the 3rd March 1938)

Dear Pandit Jawaharlal,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 25th February. I regret to find the same spirit running through of making insinuations and innuendoes and raising all sorts of matters of trifling character which are not germane to our present subject with which you started, namely, how to find the basis of approach to the most vital and prominent question of Hindu-Muslim unity. You wind up your letter by insisting upon the course that I should formulate the points in dispute and submit to you for your consideration and then carry on correspondence with you. This method, I have already stated, in my considered opinion is undesirable and inappropriate. The method you insist upon may be appropriate between two litigants and that is followed by solicitors on behalf of their clients, but national issues cannot be settled like that.

When you say that "I am afraid I must confess that I do not know what the fundamental points in dispute are", I am only amazed at your ignorance. This matter has been tackled since 1925 right up to 1935 by the most important leaders in the country and so far no solution has been found. I would beg of you to study it and do not take up a self-complacent attitude and, if you are in earnest, I don't think you will find much difficulty in realising what the main points in dispute are, because they have been constantly mentioned both in the Press and public platform even very recently.

Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Jinnah

(Copy of letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to M.A. Jinnah, dated Allahabād,  
the 8th March 1938)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you for your letter of March 3rd. I am afraid our letters to each other repeat themselves. I go on requesting you to tell us what exactly are the points in dispute which have to be discussed and you go on insisting that this should not be done by correspondence. At the same time you have pointed out that the main points in dispute have been constantly, and very recently discussed in the Press and public platform. I have carefully followed Press statements and your public speeches. In my effort to discover these points of dispute I enumerated some of the criticisms which you were reported to have made in public speeches. In your reply you stated that you were misreported, but you did not say what the correct report should have been.

Further you said that these were minor and trifling matters, but again you did not point out what the major matters were. You will perceive my difficulty.

I hope I am not making any insinuations or innuendoes, as you suggest in your last letter. Certainly it is not my intention to do so, nor to raise trifling matters

which are not germane to the present subject. But what are those matters which are germane? It may be that I am dense or not sufficiently acquainted with the intricacies of the problem. If so, I deserve to be enlightened. If you will refer me to any recent statement made in the Press or platform which will help me in understanding, I shall be grateful. It is not my desire, may I repeat, to carry on a controversy by correspondence, but only to find out what the main points in discussion or dispute are. It is surely usual for national issues to be formulated and clarified in this way to facilitate discussion. Both in national and international matters we are frequently adopting this course.

You are perfectly right in saying that this matter has been tackled since 1925 repeatedly. Do you not think that this very history warns us not to approach it in a vague manner without clear ideas as to what we object to and what we want? Apart from this, much has happened during these past few years which has altered the position. For instance, the Communal Award. Do you want this to be discussed with a view to some settlement being arrived at on another basis?

It is obvious that the Congress is exceedingly anxious to remove all causes of misunderstanding and friction. Apart from wider national issues, it would like to do so because such misunderstanding comes in the way of its work. It has frequently considered the problem and pass such resolutions and put forward such proposals as it considered right. I do not wish to discuss as to whether these were right or not. That may be a matter for argument. But according to our lights we tried to do our best. If we did not succeed to the extent we hoped to do, that is our misfortune and we shall gladly consider suggestions which might lead to better results.

What are the various aspects of this matter? May I enumerate them?

1. The Communal Award, which includes separate electorates and reservation of seats. 2. Religious guarantees. 3. Cultural protection and guarantees.

Presumably these are the three main heads. There may be some minor matters but I do not refer to them as you wish to concentrate on the main issues.

As regards the Communal Award, the position of the Congress has been clarified. If it is your desire to discuss this matter, I should like to know.

As regards religious and cultural guarantees, the Congress has given as full assurances and guarantees as is possible. If, however, any other guarantees are considered necessary they should be mentioned. About one of the questions which you have referred to in your speeches, the language question, I have written to you previously and sent you my brochure. I trust that you agree with its main conclusions.

Are we going to discuss these matters or some others which I have not mentioned above? Then again, the background of all such discussions must necessarily be a certain political and economic one—our struggle for independence, our anti-imperialism, our methods of direct action whenever necessary, our anti-war policy, our attempt to remove the exploitation of the masses, agrarian and labour problems, and the like. I take it that with the



reorganisation of the Muslim League's policy there will not be any great difference regarding this anti-imperialist background.

You will forgive me for repeating myself in these letters and for asking the same things over and over again. I do so because I am keenly desirous of your appreciating my viewpoint, which I believe is also the viewpoint of my colleagues in the Congress. I have no desire to take up your time and to spend my time in writing long letters. But my mind demands clarity before it can function effectively or think in terms of any action. Vagueness or any avoidance of real issues cannot lead to satisfactory results. It does seem strange to me that in spite of my repeated requests I am not told what issues have to be discussed.

I understand that Gandhiji has already written to you expressing his readiness to have a talk with you. I am not now the Congress President and thus have not the same representative capacity, but if I can be of any help in this matter, my services are at the disposal of the Congress and I shall gladly meet you and discuss these matters with you.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

(Copy of letter from M.A. Jinnah to Jawaharlal Nehru, dated New Delhi,  
the 17th March 1938)

Dear Pandit Jawaharlal,

I have received your letter of the 8th of March 1938. Your first letter of 18th January conveyed to me that you desire to know the points in dispute for the purpose of promoting Hindu-Muslim unity. When in reply I said that the subject-matter cannot be solved by correspondence and it was equally undesirable as discussing matters in the Press, you in your reply of the 4th February formulated a catalogue of grievances with regard to my supposed criticism of the Congress and utterances which are hardly relevant to the question for our immediate consideration. You went on persisting in the same line and you are still of opinion that those matters, although not germane to the present subject, should be further discussed, which I do not propose to do, as I have already explained to you in my previous letter.

The question with which we started as I understand is of safeguarding the rights and the interests of the Mussalmans with regard to their religion, culture, language, personal laws and political rights in the national life, the Government and the administration of the country. Various suggestions have been made which will satisfy the Mussalmans and create a sense of security and confidence in the majority community. I am surprised when you say in your letter under reply, "But what are these matters which are germane? It may be that I am dense or not sufficiently acquainted with the intricacies of the problem. If so, I deserve to be enlightened. If you will refer me to any recent statement made in the Press or platform which will help me in understanding, I shall be grateful." Perhaps you have heard of the fourteen points.

Next, as you say, apart from this, much has happened during these past years which has altered the position. Yes, I agree with you and various suggestions have appeared in the newspapers recently. For instance, if you will refer to *The Statesman* dated the 12th February 1938 there appears an article under the heading 'Through Muslim Eyes' (copy enclosed for your convenience). Next, an article in the *New Times* dated the 1st of March 1938, dealing with your pronouncement recently made I believe at the Haripura session of the Congress, where you are reported to have said: "I have examined this so-called communal question through the telescope, and if there is nothing what can you see?" This article in the *New Times* appeared on the 1st of March 1938, making various suggestions (a copy enclosed for your convenience). Further, you must have seen Mr. Aney's interview where he warned the Congress mentioning some of the points which the Muslim League would demand.

Now this is enough to show to you that various suggestions that have been made, or are likely to be made, or are expected to be made, will have to be analysed; and ultimately I consider it is the duty of every true nationalist, to whichever party or community he may belong, to make it his business and examine the situation and bring about a pact between the Mussalmans and the Hindus and create a real united front; and it should be as much your anxiety and duty as it is mine, irrespective of the question of the party or community to which we belong. But if you desire that I should collect all these suggestions and submit to you as a petitioner for you and for your colleagues to consider, I am afraid I can't do it nor can I do it for the purpose of carrying on further correspondence with regard to those various points with you. But if you still insist upon that, as you seem to do so when you say in your letter, "my mind demands clarity before it can function effectively or think in terms of any action. Vagueness or an avoidance of real issues could not lead to satisfactory results. It does seem strange to me that in spite of my repeated requests, I am not told what issues have to be discussed", this is hardly a correct description or a fair representation; but in that case I would request you to ask the Congress officially to communicate with me to that effect and I shall place the matter before the Council of the All-India Muslim League as you yourself say that you are "not the Congress President and thus have not the same representative capacity, but if I can be of any help in this matter my services are at the disposal of the Congress, and I shall gladly meet you and discuss these matters with you." As to meeting you and discussing matters with you, I need hardly say that I shall be pleased to do so.

Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Jinnah

Enclosures not included.

(Copy of letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to M.A. Jinnah, dated Calcutta, the 6th April 1938)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Your letter of the 17th March reached me in the Kumaun Hills where I had gone for a brief holiday. From there I have come to Calcutta. I propose to return to Allahabad today and I shall probably be there for the greater part of April. If it is convenient for you to come there we could meet. Or if it suits you better to go to Lucknow, I shall try to go there.

I am glad that you have indicated in your last letter a number of points which you have in mind. The enclosures you have sent mention these and I take it that they represent your viewpoint. I was somewhat surprised to see this list as I had no idea that you wanted to discuss many of these matters with us. Some of these are wholly covered by previous decisions of the Congress, some others are hardly capable of discussion.

As far as I can make out from your letter and the enclosures you have sent, you wish to discuss the following matters:

1. The fourteen points formulated by the Muslim League in 1929.
2. The Congress should withdraw all opposition to the Communal Award and should not describe it as a negation of nationalism.
3. The share of the Muslims in the State services should be definitely fixed in the Constitution by statutory enactment.
4. Muslim personal law and culture should be guaranteed by statute.
5. The Congress should take in hand the agitation in connection with the Sahidganj Mosque and should use its moral pressure to enable the Muslims to gain possession of the Mosque.
6. The Muslims' right to call Azan and perform their religious ceremonies should not be fettered in any way.
7. Muslims should have freedom to perform cow-slaughter.
8. Muslim majorities in the Provinces, where such majorities exist at present, must not be affected by any territorial re-distribution or adjustments.
9. The 'Bande Mataram' song should be given up.
10. Muslims want Urdu to be the national language of India and they desire to have statutory guarantees that the use of Urdu shall not be curtailed or damaged.
11. Muslim representation in the local bodies should be governed by the principles underlying the Communal Award, that is, separate electorates and population strength.
12. The Tricolour Flag should be changed or, alternatively, the flag of the Muslim League should be given equal importance.
13. Recognition of the Muslim League as the one authoritative and representative organisation of Indian Muslims.
14. Coalition Ministries.

It is further stated that the formula evolved by you and Babu Rajendra Prasad in 1935 does not satisfy the Muslims now and nothing on these lines will satisfy them.

It is added that the list given above is not a complete list and it can be augmented by the addition of further 'demands'. Not knowing these possible and unlimited additions I can say nothing about them. But I should like to deal with the various matters specifically mentioned and to indicate what the Congress attitude has been in regard to them.

But before considering them, the political and economic background of the free India we are working for has to be kept in mind, for ultimately that is the controlling factor. Some of these matters do not arise in considering an independent India or take a particular shape or have little importance. We can discuss them in terms of Indian independence or in terms of British dominance of India continuing. The Congress naturally thinks in terms of independence, though it adjusts itself occasionally to the present transitional and temporary phases. It is thus not interested in amendments to the present Constitution, but aims at its complete removal and its substitution by a Constitution framed by the Indian people through a Constituent Assembly. Another matter has assumed an urgent and vital significance and this is the exceedingly critical international situation and the possibility of war. This must concern India greatly and affect her struggle for freedom. This must therefore be considered the governing factor of the situation and almost everything else becomes of secondary importance, for all our efforts and petty arguments will be of little avail if the very foundation is upset. The Congress has clearly and repeatedly laid down its policy in the event of such a crisis and stated that it will be no party to imperialist war. Peace, therefore, and Indian independence is its basic policy. The Congress will very gladly and willingly cooperate with the Muslim League and all other organisations and individuals in the furtherance of this policy. I have carefully looked through the various matters to which you have drawn attention in your letter and its enclosures and I find that there is nothing in them which refers to or touches the economic demand of the masses or affects the all-important questions of poverty and unemployment. For all of us in India these are the vital issues and unless some solution is found for them, we function in vain. The question of State Services, howsoever important and worthy of consideration it might be, affects a very small number of people. The peasantry, industrial workers, artisans and petty shopkeepers form the vast majority of the population and they are not improved in any way by any of the demands listed above. Their interests should be paramount.

Many of the 'demands' involve changes of the Constitution which we are not in a position to bring about. Even if some such changes are desirable in themselves, it is not our policy to press for minor constitutional changes. We want to do away completely with the present Constitution and replace it by another for a free India.

In the same way, the desire for statutory guarantees involves constitutional

changes which we cannot give effect to. All we can do is to state that in a future constitution for a free India we want certain guarantees to be incorporated. We have done this in regard to religious, cultural, linguistic and other rights of minorities in the Karachi resolution on Fundamental Rights. We would like these Fundamental Rights to be made a part of the Constitution.

I now deal with the various matters listed above.

1. Fourteen points, I had thought, were somewhat out of date. Many of their provisions have been given effect to by the Communal Award and in other ways; some others are entirely acceptable to the Congress; yet others require constitutional changes which, as I have mentioned above, are beyond our present competence. Apart from the matters covered by the Communal Award and those involving change in the Constitution, one or two matters remain which give rise to differences of opinion which are still likely to lead to considerable agreement.

2. The Congress has clearly stated its attitude towards the Communal Award, and it comes to this that it seeks alterations only on the basis of mutual consent of the parties concerned. I do not understand how anyone can take objection to this attitude and policy. If we are asked to describe the Award as not being anti-national, that would be patently false. Even apart from what it gives to various groups, its whole basis and structure are anti-national and come in the way of the development of national unity. As you know it gives an overwhelming and wholly undeserving weightage to the European elements in certain parts of India. If we think in terms of independent India, we cannot possibly fit in this Award with it. It is true that under stress of circumstances we have sometimes to accept as a temporary measure something that is on the face of it anti-national. It is also true that in the matters governed by the Communal Award, we can only find a satisfactory and abiding solution by the consent and goodwill of the parties concerned. This is the Congress Party.

3. The fixing of the Muslims' share in the State services by statutory enactment necessarily involves the fixing of the shares of other groups and communities similarly. This would mean a rigid and compartmental State structure which will impede progress and development. At the same time, it is generally admitted that State appointments should be fairly and adequately distributed so that no community should have cause to complain. It is far better to do this by convention and agreement. The Congress is fully alive to this issue and desires to meet the wishes of various groups in the fullest measure so as to give to all minority communities, as stated in No. 11 of the fourteen points, "an adequate share in all the services of the State and in local self-governing bodies having due regard to the requirements and efficiency". The State today is becoming more and more technical and demands expert knowledge in its various departments. It is right that, if a community is backward in this technical and expert knowledge, special efforts should be made to give it this education to bring it up to a higher level. I understand that at the Unity Conference held at Allahabad in 1933 or thereabout a mutually satisfactory solution on this question of State services was arrived at.

4. As regards protection of culture, the Congress has declared its willingness to embody this in the fundamental laws of the Constitution. It has also declared that it does not wish to interfere in any way with the personal law of any community.

5. I am considerably surprised at the suggestions that the Congress should take in hand agitation in connection with Shahidganj Mosque. That is a matter to be decided either legally or by mutual agreement. The Congress prefers in all such matters the way of mutual agreement, and its services can always be utilised for this purpose where there is a desire to this effect on the part of the parties concerned. I am glad that the Premier of the Punjab has suggested that this is the only satisfactory way to a solution of the problem.

6. The right to perform religious ceremonies should certainly be guaranteed to all communities. The Congress resolution about this is quite clear. I know nothing about the particular incident relating to the Punjab village which has been referred to. No doubt many instances can be gathered together from various parts of India where petty interferences take place with Hindu, Muslim or Sikh ceremonies. These have to be tactfully dealt with wherever they arise. But the principle is quite clear and should be agreed to.

7. As regards cow slaughter, there has been a great deal of entirely false and unfounded propaganda against the Congress suggesting that the Congress was going to stop it forcibly by legislation. The Congress does not wish to undertake any legislative action in this matter to restrict the established rights of the Muslims.

8. The question of territorial distribution has not arisen in any way. If and when it arises it must be dealt with on the basis of mutual agreement of the parties concerned.

9. Regarding the *Bande Mataram* song, the Working Committee issued a long statement in October last to which I would invite your attention. First of all, it has to be remembered that no formal national anthem has been adopted by the Congress at any time. It is true, however, that *Bande Mataram* song has been intimately associated with Indian nationalism for more than thirty years and numerous associations of sentiment and sacrifice have gathered round it. Popular songs are not made to order, nor can they be successfully imposed. They grow out of public sentiment. During all these thirty or more years the *Bande Mataram* song was treated as a national song in praise of India. Nor to my knowledge was any objection taken to it except on political grounds by the Government. When, however, some objections were raised, the Working Committee carefully considered the matter and ultimately decided to recommend that certain stanzas, which contained certain allegorical references, might not be used on national platforms or occasions. The two stanzas that have been recommended by the Working Committee for use as a national song have not a word or a phrase which can offend anybody from any point of view, and I am surprised that anyone can object to them. They may appeal to some more than to others. Some may prefer another national song; they have full freedom to

do so. But to compel large numbers of people to give up what they have long valued and grown attached to is to cause needless hurt to them and injure the national movement itself. It would be improper for a national organisation to do this.

10. About Urdu and Hindi I have previously written to you and have also sent you my pamphlet on the question of language. The Congress has declared in favour of guarantees for languages and cultures. I want to encourage all the great provincial languages of India, [and,] at the same time, to make Hindustani, as written both in Nagri and Urdu scripts, the national language. Both scripts should be officially recognised and the choice should be left to the people concerned. In fact, this policy is being pursued by the Congress Ministries.

11. The Congress has long been of opinion that joint electorates are preferable to separate electorates from the point of view of national unity and harmonious cooperation between the different communities. But joint electorates, in order to have real value, must not be imposed on unwilling groups. Hence the Congress is quite clear that their introduction should depend on their acceptance by the people concerned. This is the policy that is being pursued by the Congress Ministries in regard to local bodies. Recently, in a Bill dealing with local bodies introduced in the Bombay Assembly, separate electorates were maintained but an option was given to the people concerned to adopt a joint electorate, if they so chose. This principle seems to be in exact accordance with No. 5 of the fourteen points, which lays down that "representation of communal groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorate as at present, provided that it shall be open to any community, at any time, to abandon its separate electorate in favour of joint electorate". It surprises me that the Muslim League group in the Bombay Assembly should have opposed the Bill with its optional clause although this carried out the very policy of the Muslim League.

May I also point out that in the resolution passed by the Muslim League in 1929, at the time it adopted the fourteen points, it was stated that the 'Mussalmans' will not consent to joint electorates unless Sind is actually constituted into a separate Province and reforms in fact are introduced in the N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other Provinces. So far as Baluchistan is concerned, the Congress is committed to a levelling up of this area in the same way.

12. The National Tricolour Flag was accepted originally in 1929 by the Congress after full and careful consultation with eminent Muslims, Sikhs and other leaders. Obviously, a country and national movement must have a national flag representing the nation and all communities in it. No communal flag can represent the nation. If we did not possess a national flag now we would have to evolve one. The present national flag had its colours originally selected in order to represent the various communities, but we did not like to lay stress on this communal aspect of the colours. Artistically I think the combination of orange, white and green has resulted in a flag which is probably the most beautiful of all national flags. For these many years our flag has been used and it has spread to the remotest village and brought hope and courage and a sense of all-India unity

to our masses. It has been associated with great sacrifices on the part of our people, including Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, and many have suffered lathi blows and imprisonment and even death in defending it from insult or injury. Thus a powerful sentiment has grown up in its favour. On innumerable occasions Maulana Mahomed Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali and many leaders of the Muslim League today have associated themselves with this flag and emphasised its virtues and significance as a symbol of Indian unity. It has spread outside the Congress ranks and been generally recognised as the flag of the nation. It is difficult to understand how anyone can reasonably object to it now. Communal flags cannot obviously take its place for that can only mean a host of flags of various communities being used together and thus emphasising our disunity and separateness. Communal flags might be used for religious functions, but they have no place at any national functions or over any public buildings meant for various communities. May I add that during the past few months, on several occasions, the national flag has been insulted by some members or volunteers of the Muslim League? This has pained us greatly but we have deliberately avoided anything in the nature of conflict in order not to add to communal bitterness. We have also issued strict orders, and they have been obeyed, that no interference should take place with the Muslim League flag even though it might be inappropriately displayed.

13. I do not understand what is meant by our recognition of the Muslim League as the one and the only organisation of Indian Muslims. Obviously the Muslim League is an important communal organisation and we deal with it as such. But we have to deal with all organisations and individuals that come within our ken. We do not determine the measure of importance or distinction they possess. There are a large number, about a hundred thousand, of Muslims on the Congress rolls, many of whom have been our close companions, in prisons and outside, for many years and we value their comradeship highly. There are many organisations which contain Muslims and non-Muslims alike such as the Trade Unions, Peasant Unions, Kisan Sabhas, Debt Committees, Zamindar Associations, Chambers of Commerce, Employers' Association, etc. and we have contacts with them. There are special Muslim organisations such as the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the Proja Party, the Ahrar and others which claim attention. Inevitably the more important the organisation the more the attention paid to it, but this importance does not come from outside recognition, but from inherent strength. And the other organisations, even though they might be younger and smaller, cannot be ignored.

14. I should like to know what is meant by coalition. A Ministry must have a definite political and economic programme and policy. Any other kind of Ministry would be a disjointed and ineffective body, with no clear mind or direction. Given a common political and economic programme and policy, cooperation is easy. You know probably that some such cooperation was sought for and obtained by the Congress in the Frontier Province. In Bombay also repeated attempts were made on behalf of the Congress to obtain this



cooperation on the basis of a common programme. The Congress has gone to the Assemblies with a definite programme and in furtherance of a clear policy. It will always gladly cooperate with other groups whether it is in a majority or a minority in an Assembly, in furtherance of that programme and policy. On that basis I can conceive of even coalition Ministries being formed. Without that basis the Congress has no interest in a Ministry or in an Assembly.

I have dealt, I am afraid at exceeding length, with various points raised in your letter and its enclosures. I am glad that I have had a glimpse into your mind through this correspondence as this enables me to understand a little better the problems that are before you and perhaps others. I agree entirely that it is the duty of every Indian to bring about harmonious joint effort of all of us for the achievement of India's freedom and the ending of the poverty of her people. For me, and I take it for most of us, the Congress has been a means to that end and not an end in itself. It has been a high privilege for us to work through the Congress because it has drawn to itself the love of millions of our countrymen and through their sacrifices and united effort, taken us a long way to our goal. But much remains to be done and we have all to pull together to that end.

Personally, the idea of pacts and the like does not appeal to me, though perhaps they might be necessary occasionally. What seems to me far more important is a more basic understanding of each other, bringing with it the desire and ability to cooperate together. That larger cooperation, if it is to include our millions, must necessarily be in the interests of these millions. My mind, therefore, is continually occupied with the problems of these unhappy masses of this country and I view all other problems in this light. I should like to view the communal problem also in this perspective, for otherwise it has no great significance for me.

You seem to imagine that I wanted you to put forward suggestions as a petitioner, and then you propose that the Congress should officially communicate with you. Surely you have misunderstood me and done yourself and me an injustice. There is no question of petitioning either by you or by me, but a desire to understand each other and the problem that we have been discussing. I do not understand the significance of your wanting an official intimation from the Congress. I did not ask you for an official reply on behalf of the Muslim League. Organisations do not function in this way. It is not a question of prestige for the Congress or for any of us, for we are keener on reaching the goal we have set before us than on small matters of prestige. The Congress is a great enough organisation to ignore such petty matters, and if some of us have gained a measure of influence and popularity, we have done so in the shadow of the Congress.

You will remember that I took the initiative in writing to you and requesting you to enlighten me as to what your objections were to the Congress policy and what, according to you, were the points in dispute. I had read many of your speeches, as reported in the Press, and I found to my regret that they were full of strong attacks on the Congress which, according to my way of thinking, were not

justified. I wanted to remove any misunderstandings, where such existed, and to clear the air.

I have found, chiefly in the Urdu Press, the most astounding falsehoods about the Congress. I refer to facts, not to opinion, and facts within my knowledge. Two days ago, here in Calcutta, I saw a circular letter or notice issued by the Secretary of a Muslim League. This contained a list of the so-called misdeeds of the U.P. Government. I read this with amazement for there was not an iota of truth in most of the charges. I suppose they were garnered from the Urdu Press. Through the Press and platform such charges have been repeated on numerous occasions and communal passions have thus been roused and bitterness created. This has grieved me and I have sought by writing to you and to Nawab Ismail Khan to find a way of checking this deplorable deterioration of our public life, as well as a surer basis for cooperation. That problem still faces us and I hope we shall solve it.

I have mentioned earlier in this letter the critical international situation and the terrible sense of impending catastrophe that hangs over the world. My mind is obsessed with this and I want India to realise it and be ready for all consequences, good or ill, that may follow from it. In this period of world crisis all of us, to whatever party or group we might belong and whatever our differences might be, have the primary duty of holding together to protect our people from the perils that might encompass them. Our differences and arguments seem trivial when the future of the world and India hangs in the balance. It is in the hope that all of us will succeed in building up this larger unity in our country that I have written to you and others repeatedly and at length.

There is one small matter I should like to mention. The report of my speech at Haripura, as given in your letter and the newspaper articles, is not correct.

We have been corresponding for some time and many vague 'rumours' are afloat as to what we have been saying to each other. Anxious enquiries come to me and I have no doubt that similar enquiries are addressed to you also. I think that we might take the public into our confidence now, for this is a public matter in which many are interested. I suggest, therefore, that our correspondence might be released to the Press. I presume you will have no objection.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

(Copy of letter from M.A. Jinnah to Jawaharlal Nehru, dated Bombay, the  
12th April 1938)

Dear Pandit Jawaharlal,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 6th April 1938. I am extremely obliged to you for informing me that you propose to return to Allahabad and shall probably be there for a greater part of April and suggesting that if it would be convenient for me to come there, we could meet, or if it suits me better to go to Lucknow, you

will try to go there. I am afraid that it is not possible for me owing to my other engagements, but I shall be in Bombay about the end of April and if it is convenient to you I shall be very glad to meet you.

As to the rest of your letter, it has been to me a most painful reading. It seems to me that you cannot even accurately interpret my letter as you very honestly say that your mind is obsessed with the international situation and the sense of impending catastrophe that hangs over the world, so you are thinking in terms entirely divorced from realities which face us in India. I can only express my great regret at your turning and twisting of what I wrote to you and putting entirely a wrong complexion upon the position I have placed before you at your request. You have formulated certain points in your letter which you father upon me to begin with as my proposals. I sent you extracts from the Press which had recently appeared simply because you repeatedly asserted and appealed to me that you would be grateful if I would refer you to any recent statements made in the Press or platform which would help you in understanding matters. Those are some of the matters which are undoubtedly agitating Muslim India, but the question how to meet them and to what extent and by what means and methods is the business, as I have said before, of every true nationalist to solve. Whether constitutional changes are necessary, whether we should do it by agreement or convention and so forth, are matters, I thought, for discussion, but I am extremely sorry to find that you have in your letter already pronounced your judgment and given your decisions on a good many of them with a preamble which negativates any suggestion of discussion which may lead to a settlement as you start by saying, "I was so much surprised to see this list as I have no idea that you wanted to discuss many of these matters with us. Some of these are wholly covered by previous decisions of the Congress, some others are hardly capable of discussion" and then you proceed to your conclusions having formulated the points according to your own notions. Your tone and language again display the same arrogance and militant spirit, as if the Congress is the sovereign power, and, as an indication, you extend your patronage by saying that "Obviously the Muslim League is an important communal organisation and we deal with it as such. But we have to deal with all organisations and individuals that come within our ken. We do not determine the measure of importance or distinction they possess" and then you mention various other organisations. Here I add that in my opinion, unless the Congress recognises the Muslim League on a footing of complete equality and is prepared as such to negotiate for a Hindu-Muslim settlement, we shall have to wait and depend upon our inherent strength which will "determine the measure of importance and distinction it possesses". Having regard to your mentality, it is really difficult for me to make you understand the position any further. Of course, as I have said before, I do not propose to discuss the various matters referred to by you by means of and through correspondence, as, in my opinion, that is not the way to tackle this matter.

With regard to your reference to certain falsehoods that have appeared about the Congress in Urdu Press, which, you say, have astounded you, and with regard

to the circular letter referred to about the misdeeds of the U.P. Government, I can express no opinion without investigation, but I can give you any number of falsehoods that have appeared in the Congress Press and in statements of Congressmen with regard to the All-India Muslim League, some of the leaders and those who are connected with it. Similarly, I can give instances which are deliberately appearing in the Congress Press and speeches of Congressmen which are daily deliberately misrepresenting and vilifying the Muslim composition of the Bengal, Sind, Punjab and Assam Governments with a view to break those Governments, but that is not the subject matter of our correspondence and, besides, no useful purpose will be served in doing so.

With regard to your request that our correspondence should be released to the Press, I have no objection provided that the correspondence between me and Mr. Gandhi is also published simultaneously, as we both have referred to him and his correspondence with me in ours. You will please, therefore, obtain the permission of Mr. Gandhi to that effect or, if you wish, I will write to him informing him that you desire to release the correspondence between us to the Press, and I am willing to agree to it provided he agrees that the correspondence between him and myself is also released.

Yours sincerely,  
M.A. Jinnah

(Copy of letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to M.A. Jinnah, dated Allahabad,  
the 16th April 1938)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Your letter of April 12th has just reached me.

I am exceedingly sorry that anything that I have written to you should have caused you pain. It seems to be true that we approach public problems from different standpoints and inevitably I try to place my viewpoint before you and seek to gain your appreciation of it. To say anything that might pain you would defeat my own purpose, even apart from its impropriety. At the same time I owe it to you and to myself to endeavour to place frankly before you how my mind works and what my views are on the subject-matter under discussion. Our viewpoints might differ, but I do believe that the margin of difference can be lessened by a frank approach on either side. I have sought to make this approach in all sincerity and with every desire on my part not to say anything that might come in the way.

In my last letter I dealt with the various points mentioned in the extracts you have sent me, as I presumed that, as you had drawn my attention to them, they might to a large extent represent what you had in mind. As you know I have been trying to get at these points of difference and when I saw something concrete, I wanted to give my reason to it. I tried to state what the Congress opinion has been in regard to them. There is no finality in day-to-day policies. It is for the Congress, if it so chooses, to vary any policy. All I can do is to state what the past

and present policy is.

I regret that you think that I write in an arrogant and militant spirit and as if I considered the Congress as the sovereign power. The fact is it is circumscribed in a hundred ways and further it may have to go through the wilderness many a time again before it achieves its objective. You have referred to my obsession with the international situation and the sense of impending catastrophe that possess me. If I feel that way as I do, I can hardly grow complacent or imagine that the Congress is sovereign. But when I discuss Congress policies as a Congressman, I can only repeat what these are and not bring in my own particular view on the subject, if these happen to be at variance with Congress resolution.

You point out that the Congress Press has contained numerous falsehoods in regard to the Muslim League and some of its leaders, as well as the Provincial Governments of Bengal, Punjab, Sind and Assam. I entirely agree with you that falsehoods, misrepresentations and insinuations are to be deprecated and countered wherever they might occur in the Urdu, Hindi or English Press, or whatever the political complexion of the newspaper. There is no such thing as the Congress Press over which the Congress has control, but it is true that many newspapers generally support the Congress. But whether we can influence them or not, we certainly want to stop all such false and misleading statements and to express our disapproval of them. In this matter, I can only beg of you to point out specific instances so that we might take necessary action.

I note what you say about the publication of our correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi. I am therefore writing to him to seek his permission as suggested by you. I am afraid, it will hardly be possible for me to visit Bombay in April or May. Early in June I intend sailing for Europe. In case I go to Bombay earlier I shall inform you so that we might have the opportunity of meeting. I understand that you will be meeting Mahatma Gandhi in the near future.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. *Hindu-Muslim Unity talks—publication of correspondence between M.A. Jinnah and Congress leaders ("Indian Nation", dated 22 June 1938)*

BOMBAY, June 20. It is understood that the whole correspondence between Mr. Jinnah and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah, published already, and the notes containing extracts of talks between Mr. Subhas Bose and Mahatma Gandhi on the one hand and Mr. Jinnah on the other, together with the memorandum submitted by the Congress to the Muslim League and the League's reply thereto, and also the correspondence between Mr. Jinnah and Nawab Ismail Khan, a prominent member of the Muslim League, as well as that between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Nawab Ismail Khan, will be published in the form of a brochure under the authority of Mr. Jinnah.—U.P.

6. *Extract from a letter dated the 30th June 1938 from the Secretary, A.I.S.A., Utkal Branch, to Sjt. Shankerlalji Banker*

The Utkal work is growing and probably the A.I.V.I.A. work in Orissa will have to be conducted by me. Prafulla Babu appointed Gopabandhu Babu to act as his representative in Orissa and schemes were accordingly submitted. Now Gopabandhu Babu feels that he will not be able to manage. The jails are troubling us for the supply of yarn and the Government orders for khadi are increasing. Besides all these, we have the schemes of sericulture and tussar rearing to carry through. As a result, by the end of this year at least 30 centres will be in operation in Orissa. It has been finally settled in consultation with the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Development and the Director of Development that the Government of Orissa will receive their entire requirement of yarn, cotton, tussar, silk and eri (sic) from the A.I.S.A. Their societies and their master weavers in the villages will weave according to our requirements and terms. These articles will be finished, dyed and printed in the Government Institute and then supplied to us for sales. The Marketing Organisation and the Institute for finishing, dyeing and printing will be conducted with Government money, a bulk of which is received from the Government of India. This is a great triumph of our Congress Ministries to do likewise (sic).

7. *A letter from Murali Manohar Prasad\**

Patna  
12-7-1938

My dear Sir,

I am sorry for the delay in acknowledging your kind letter. I realise but too well that the meaning of my articles has been perverted and that there is a world of difference between the state of affairs obtaining in C.P. and that obtaining here. Nonetheless I feel that the articles I wrote had become a necessity. I believe they have had a salutary [effect]. I am sorry to have to say that tendencies were apparent which were very far from desirable. If you had been here recently you could not have failed to notice that criticisms of the Ministry have become general and widespread. The universal goodwill with which the Ministry began has ceased to exist and in its place there is a growing revulsion of feeling against the Ministry. While the tenancy legislation has dragged on inordinately, thereby killing at the very start such psychological effect it might have had on the people, the administrative machine has remained precisely what it was. Indeed, there was reason to believe that the old bureaucrats having lost their initiative, there has been an all-round slackening with the result that the police and other executive underlings continue to have their ways. Things have not improved by reason of

the complete lack of coordination among the Ministers. Since the Bettiah Raj managership episode there has been open talk of breach between Sri Babu and Anugrah Babu. At any rate, Sri Babu's lieutenants openly talk of it. All this might have escaped notice, at least for some time, but the indecisiveness and lack of clear policy about appointments have provoked [expectations] which cannot all be met. You know about the Chapra Public Prosecutorship. Baldeva Babu, government's legal expert, has advised repeatedly that Rai Bahadar Brij Behari Prasad is, in his opinion, one of the ablest law officers in the Province. Sri Babu knows that Vishwanath Misra does not pay even income-tax and that there are at least three people above him in the profession at Chapra—Benaras Singh, Yasin Khan and Mahabir Prasad; he admits that in the case of Vishwanath it is nothing more than his demanding his price for the khadi he wears, but the matter has been hanging fire for nearly six months now. If Dr. Mahmud is to be believed, he was approached by Vishwanath and his friends with the proposition that all that the Prime Minister wanted was for him to say that he could appoint him and the thing would be done. He refused. The very fact that in such a clear case as this matters should be kept pending for well over six months gives room for imputations and accusations. You know Babu Ramanand of Chapra—he is married to one of your nieces of Tripalpoor. He was for sixteen years Assistant Manager of the Mangarh Wards Estate and his record, as testified to by the Collector, the Commissioner, and the Board of Revenue, was uniformly satisfactory. He applied some months ago for the Assistant Managership of the Bettiah estate, has been out of employ ever since the Mangarh estate was discharged. But the Prime Minister passed an order that the question should be kept pending. Meanwhile, Bishundeva Narayan Singh of Begusarai, M.L.C., was appointed as an Assistant Manager and he took over the Chapra circle as far back as 9th of May last. I may add incidentally that soon after the Ministry took office Bishundeva Babu was granted settlement of a fine piece of land close to Mr. P.K. Sen's house although there were hundreds of applicants for the land, men who genuinely live and practise their professions in Patna unlike Bishundeva Babu who has utilised a plot of land settled with him near the Patna Railway station for building a very paying commercial block. But, to resume Babu Ramanand's story. He was later appointed by the Board of Revenue as Manager, Maksudpur Court of Wards estate. This estate is so hopelessly involved in debt that the Collector thought that management by Court of Wards was a public wrong. He made representations and a conference was held in Patna where Babu Ramanand seems to have explained with a wealth of facts and figures that it was no use keeping the estate under the control of Wards. Ultimately it was decided that the estate was to be kept under Court of Wards for at least three months on the insistence of Sri Babu. But the Collector of Gaya made further representations as a result of which the estate had to be given up. Babu Ramanand applied for the post of Managership of Palamau Wards estate and he got a letter from the Board of Revenue, the appointing authority, to say that he was appointed and that he should take over charge on the 2nd July. But

soon after he got another letter from the Board, at the instance of the Prime Minister, to the effect that the appointment was stayed and that he was not to join on the 2nd July. For the first time at this stage I asked the Prime Minister what the matter was, explaining that if he wanted appointments to be made in a particular way it was best to issue directions beforehand but that when in the absence of such directions the Board exercised its discretion by appointing a particular individual it should not be interfered with unless it was for very exceptional reasons. His reply was astounding. He said [a] lot of pressure was being brought to bear on him by Congress friends, that I would be surprised to hear that Jadubans Sahay, M.L.A., was a candidate for the post and, last but not least, he frankly admitted he had a feeling against Babu Ramanand that at the conference about the Makenhpur estate referred to above while he, the P.M., was keen that the estate should be managed by the Court of Wards for some months because of consideration for the proprietor, Ramanand Babu had insisted on providing facts and figures to prove that it could not be done. In other words, Ramanand Babu had behaved like a typical public servant, albeit without imagination. The Prime Minister's anxiety to retain management by the Court of Wards was due entirely to personal reasons. It appears Babu Chandreshwar Prasad Narayan Sinha of Muzaffarpur was also interested in the matter in a personal way. Babu Ramanand's appointment as Manager of Palamau Court of Wards does not seem likely to materialise. This apart, it appears Sri Babu's intervention, once because of personal interest and the other because of Sarangdhar's pressure, was responsible for twice rejecting the admittedly superior claims of one Rajendra Prasad for appointment as Assistant Director of Agriculture, compared to the two persons appointed one after another, one a Bhumihar and the other a Rajput. Other instances could be given. There is an impression abroad, not without justification either, that appointments cannot be had without some personal influence with either the Ministers or the Parliamentary Secretaries and charges of favouritism and nepotism are openly made in the bazars, and they cannot all be refuted. Thus lack of constructive, creat[ive] capacity, coupled with complete absence of drive and despatch, is combined with universal feeling that appointments are made on the basis of favouritism and for personal considerations. I fear the outlook is gloomy. From among the rank and file in the Congress a new class of job-hunters is being created, ambition rules the day and demoralisation is viable on all sides. The Kisan Sabha is getting stronger and stronger quietly and silently. And the Ministry is making matters worse by the reactions it has been provoking.

I shall of course be careful although, I fear, to be careful means nothing less than silence. I would have written to you much earlier and asked for definite directions but I was deferred by the state of your health. I need not try to prove my bonafides to you. I have had sleepless nights. Unfortunately I am so



constituted that I foam and fret out anything approaching a reflection on the honour and reputation of the Congress.

With best respect,

I remain yours affectionately,  
Murali

P.S. This letter is of course entirely confidential. If so, I suggested your enquiring from Binoda the details about the contract for Muzaffarpore-Sitamarhi road.

\*Addressee not known.

8. *Statement dated 15 August 1938 by Jamil Ahmad Khan, Pleader and Municipal Commissioner, Bhagalpur, on communal riots in Bhagalpur*

I want to draw the attention of the High Command of the Congress towards the activities of the Congress leaders of Bhagalpur regarding the communal riots in this town. Had the local Congress leaders been acting like true Congressites, and followed strictly the Congress creed, such a sad catastrophe would never have come to pass. But they instead became out and out communal and spread communalism both by their conduct and speeches.

[For] a month before it was evidently known to all that the feelings of both the communities have swelled high, and it required merely a slight prick to burst, but no attempt was made by the Congressites to pacify and soothe the feelings of the people. But, on the contrary, they openly joined hands with Hindu Mahasabha, and attended meetings convened by the Mahasabha and delivered inflammatory speeches rousing the feelings of the masses. Our leaders have completely remained communal before, during and after the riots. Communal attitude of the Congress leaders gave much impetus to the persistent demand by the masses for the grant of licence for the Rath Jatra procession through the disputed route. It is the constant endeavour of the Congress authorities which succeeded in securing licence for the same. During the riots also, they totally failed in the discharge of their duties, and proved their unfitness and incompetency.

I also very much regret for the wrong and one-sided reports supplied by the Congress Office, and I especially draw the attention of the people towards the statement issued by the Secretary of the District Congress Committee published in some Hindi papers in which the evacuation of the terrified and helpless Moslems of Mirjanhat has been described as the preparation for attack by them in that locality.

I hear that the Assistant Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee is present here, but he is sitting tight in the Dak Bungalow and granting interviews

to his avowed disciples. His activities are merely confined to his dancing attendance of the big officials. But he is not kind enough to take the pains of inspecting the affected areas and of sympathising with the sufferers and injured persons.

If such remains the mentality of the Congress people, I don't know how far it can succeed in enlisting support and cooperation of any other minorities who cannot think for a moment that their interests are safe in the hands of the Congress.

The failure of the local Congress leaders to calm down the communal agitation, their inability to avert a riot, and their carelessness to give relief to the sufferers make one believe that the Congress is still unfit to shoulder responsibilities of the children of the soil.

9. *Statement dated 1 September 1938 by Ram Narayan Singh, President, District Congress Committee, Hazaribagh, on Krishna Ballabh Sahai, Parliamentary Secretary*

Babu Krishna Ballabh Sahai was originally a resident of the village Shekhpura in the district of Patna. His parents are still there. He has residential houses also in my district of Hazaribagh and now claims to be a resident of this district, although neither he nor any of his relatives nor any member of his family at present resides there. He, a very clever man as he is, selected this district as a field for political activities. No man in the world can or should claim to know him better than myself. He has almost all along been the Secretary of the Hazaribagh District Congress Committee of which I similarly remained as the President. We both are whole-time workers of the Congress and have thus always worked and lived together even in jails. He is intelligent, hard working and very clever too. In short, so far as the qualities of the brain go, he is richly gifted with; but so far as his possession of the qualities of the heart is concerned, for instance truthfulness, honesty, straightforwardness and such other virtues, I regret that he has been, and still is, very poor. Knowing his qualities, with God as my witness and with all the sincerest possible love and sympathy, I, as any man in the world, am capable of even for the dearest of my relatives, I tried my utmost to correct him but I failed owing to undue favours shown to him either out of ignorance or otherwise by Provincial Congress authorities, including Babu Rajendra Prasad. He is too jealous to allow (of course, only to the extent he can) any of his co-workers to go ahead of him and is always prepared to resort to anything and to avail all opportunities to fulfil his personal ends and ambitions. Although I, as I said above, always treated him so well, he looked upon me as a thorn in his way and left no stone ever unturned also to put me down. I give below some instances of his misdeeds against me and others.

(1) During the District Board election in 1924, he secretly helped his uncle

his membership of the Sangh. He was all along paid his allowances even when he was in jail. In 1932 he was fined Rs.50 or so and he being the son of a Police Sub-Inspector, the police officers who were ordered to attach his property at Brindra to realise the fine, were in fact in sympathy with him and only acted a farce. Very little of his property was attached and again sold to his men for a nominal price. His loss in this connection must not amount to more than Rs.20 or 25 but to compensate this so-called great loss he applied to the Sangh and received therefrom an additional allowance of Rs.25 a month and that, I think, for a long time. Besides, he has taken Rs.15 or so a month from Bihar Central Relief Committee. I wonder at his faith, his creed and his patriotism. I must express my regret at the generosity of Rajendra Babu with the help of which such a man is being allowed to exploit national resources for personal aggrandizement and enjoyment. I put up with him as a necessary evil but I always also tried to correct him but failed for reasons mentioned above.

(7) He has always tried to flatter and to keep in good humour the Provincial Congress authorities and to gain thereby some influence with them only to crush and suppress the Congress workers of my district if and when they had appeared acting against his sweet will and pleasure. It was to check the growing influence, in the district, of Sreemati Saraswati Devi that he managed to get cancelled the arrangement of the putting up of Mahatma Gandhijee during his last visit to Hazaribagh in her house and arranged the same in the house of a man named B. Surat Kumar Gupta who had already used, and did use also later, Mahatmajee's stay in his house against Congress candidates in the District Board and the Assembly elections respectively.

(8) During the last election he took a car and sufficient money from Mr. N.N. Rakshit to work for his election but he did actually little or no work for the success of Mr. Rakshit who too was a Congress candidate and used the car and almost all the money wholly and solely for his own election. Even after the election the car was not returned to Mr. Rakshit but it was so done only when Mr. Rakshit took legal steps for the purpose.

(9) During the same last election and in my presence a pact was entered into between Mr. Abdul Razak and Babu K.B. Sahai that both of them would work together for the success of both during the election. Mr. Abdul Razak according to the pact honestly worked for Babu K.B. Sahai but Babu K.B. Sahai did not. Not only this, in some of the Thanas workers of Babu K.B. Sahai worked against Mr. Razak and that [too with] the knowledge and [sometimes] also [under the] instructions of Babu K.B. Sahai.

(10) The Bihar Provincial Congress authorities have done the greatest of injustice to the people of Chhotanagpur that no man from this great area has been taken in the Bihar Cabinet. Babu K.B. Sahai, by accepting the post of a Parliamentary Secretary, has been a party to this act of injustice and betrayed the cause of my Chhotanagpur. Had he taken a bold and selfless stand and attitude in the matter, this injustice [would] not have been done and in the circumstances it was he who would have been the first Congress Minister from Chhotanagpur.

(11) Babu K.B. Sahai is too anti-Bengalee and too pro-Kayasth. In the presence of Babus Kidarnath and Radha Gobind, pleaders, and myself, he (Babu K.B. Sahai) definitely said that if Babu Jimutbahan Sen (a Bengalee) would be taken as a Minister, he (Babu K.B. Sahai) would not accept the position of a Parliamentary Secretary. But he could not make this sacrifice as a protest against the said great injustice done to Chhotanagpur. Besides, my information is that for the present Biharee-Bengalee question in Behar, Babu K.B. Sahai is responsible. He is reported to be the author of the circular sent to all districts which is interpreted as prejudicial to the interests of Bengalees in Bihar.

(12) The Moslem community of Bihar is also too much annoyed at the arrogant conduct of Babu K.B. Sahai.

(13) In the beginning of the last election by means of pamphlets distributed throughout the district and also by means of public speeches he (Babu K.B. Sahai) announced to the people that deducting the election expenses, all his income will be the income of the District Congress Committee and for his maintenance he will accept whatever the said Committee would allow him for the purpose. Now he sends some contribution to the Committee every month, no doubt, but that by way of a generous gift. According to the promise made, his income is not yet the income of the Committee.

(14) He has generally received money from the public whom he calls personal friends for personal use and that specially during his election. This is also not proper for a public man.

(15) In his first travelling allowance bill, he has made a false entry that he travelled by car from Hazaribagh to Patna and back, whereas he had travelled along with several others from the Hazaribagh railway station to Patna in the third class compartment of a railway train.

When I formally reported the matter to Rajendra Babu and he was asked to explain, he had the audacity to say that my statement was false and malicious. Another downright lie.

Most of what I have stated are facts, God's [own] truth and the remaining few are my considered opinion, the expression of a true heart, and I state them all with God as my witness. Very little of this can even be contradicted. If there be a need for thorough enquiry, I shall produce evidence. Babu K.B. Sahai will be very useful to the nation, after sufficient purification. At present I make bold to say that he is not fit to be entrusted with what he has been favoured with. I feel and believe that it is the want of truth and honesty which is the real cause of our slavery and that unless and until at least a sufficient number of us Indians regain these great virtues, our fate is doomed. Without these there can be no strong and enduring national organisation, by means of which alone a slave nation can free itself and maintain its freedom. In the end, I appeal to Mahatmajee and all other true patriots of the country to enquire into the truths of my statement, if anybody has the slightest doubt about it, and also to do what is necessary and desirable in the present deplorable circumstances of the country.

10. *A letter from Thakur Ram Nandan Singh\**

Sir,

I have the honour to bring to your kind notice the following cases of the District Board, Muzaffarpur, which will clearly show how the Chairman of the said Board has been wasting public money for showing favouritism to a particular contractor and thus will make clear how the administration of the said District Board is carried on.

There was a project of stone metalling of the Sitamarhi Road No. 1 from the 1st to the 6th mile and from the 34th to the 37th mile. The project is likely to involve an expenditure of about one lakh and thirty thousand to be met from the Road Development Account. The work was formerly given to one Premchand, the contractor, by the ex-Chairman, Babu Chandreshwar Prasad Narain Sinha, at the rate of Rs.34 per hundred cubic feet of Pakur stone ballast f.o.r. Muzaffarpur. For some time for want of money the project in question could not be taken up. This year fund being available, the work has been started and the contract has been given to one Sheo Shanker Sinha of village Maur, district Monghyr, without calling upon any tender in spite of the Government circular to that effect.

As I have already submitted, the contract was formerly given to Premchand at the rate of Rs.34 per hundred cubic feet but the said Sheo Shanker Sinha has now been allowed Rs.43/14/- per hundred cubic feet for the same work (vide District Engineer's letter No. 255, dated the 7th April 1938). That the Superintending Engineer, North Bihar Circle, who is supposed to control the project on behalf of the Government received tender from other contractors who showed their readiness to do the work at the rate of Rs.35 per hundred cubic feet of Pakur stone ballast. Accordingly the Superintending Engineer wrote to the District Engineer, Muzaffarpur, in his D.O. No. 3374 dated nil, directing him to ask the contractor Sheo Shanker Sinha to produce money receipt of the Railway before making any payment to him and that this fact be stipulated in his agreement. That the Chairman, District Board, Muzaffarpur, on mere receipt of a petition from the contractor Babu Sheo Shanker Sinha that the Railway freight had been increased, allowed at the rate of Rs.41 per hundred cubic feet of the stone ballast for both the 1st to the 6th and 34th to the 37th mile on the Sitamarhi Road (vide District Engineer's letter No. 2649 dated the 1st June 1938) and subsequently raised the rate for the 34th to the 37th mile on the Sitamarhi Road to Rs. 47/2/- per hundred cubic feet (vide the District Engineer's letter No. 4272 dated the 27th June 1938).

From an enquiry from the Chief Commercial Manager, East Indian Railway, and General Traffic Manager, it transpires that the Railway freight per md. of stone ballast in through booking will be -/3/8 which clearly shows that one can easily supply at the rate of Rs.35 per hundred cubic feet.

That the contractor, Babu Sheo Shanker Sinha, has drawn up an agreement [at] the rates allowed to him by the Chairman, District Board, and in order to

justify his claim for payment at the enhanced rate he brought some wagons on through booking though in practice local booking is actually done.

That the contractor has been already paid for 8,849 cubic feet through the measurement book No.56 at the rate of Rs.41 per hundred cubic feet as allowed in the agreement, and so it is clear that if he is paid for the full quantity of supply at this enhanced rate, he will receive Rs.20,000 in excess over and above what one can make profit at the rate of Rs.35 per hundred cubic feet.

That the Chairman, in spite of various representation by the local contractors for supply of stone ballast at a lower rate of Rs.35 per hundred cubic feet thought it proper to show favouritism to Babu Sheo Shanker Sinha at the cost of the District Board money.

As it will appear from the District Board record, the contractor Babu Sheo Shanker Sinha was given the work of the stone metalling from the 1st to 6th mile on Sitamarhi Road on the 7th April 1938 and he was asked to execute agreement within 7 days of the receipt of the letter after depositing earnest money at the rate of 10 per cent, over the estimated amount which comes up to approximately Rs.13,000 and was further asked to draw up the agreement before commencing the supply of the material. But as mysterious are the ways of the working of the District Board, Muzaffarpur, the contractor Babu Sheo Shanker Sinha did neither execute the agreement nor he deposited earnest money as demanded. But in spite of this the Chairman, Distt. Board, permitted the contractor to collect stone metals on road side all along and above all he advanced Rs.17,000 in May last as a reward for disobedience of the District Board order in a mere production of a certificate produced by the Sub-Overseer in charge.

There is another glaring instance of favouritism which the Chairman, District Board, Muzaffarpur, has shown to the said contractor Babu Sheo Shanker Sinha. This relates to a case in which the Chairman has made an irregular payment to Mr. Sinha. The fact of the case is that Sheo Shanker Sinha burnt bricks in the kiln at Reghai Road for which he practically received no formal order from the District Board prior to his burning the bricks there and there was no sanctioned estimate of any project to be taken up in that area in which the bricks in question were burnt. In spite of it the contractor was paid for the bricks in the kiln at Reghai in the year 1937. Later on it was designed to construct a Causeway in the 9th and 10th mile of the Bowal Bazar Road No.52, to justify the payment as already made to Sheo Shanker Sinha to the extent of Rs.3,500 and Rs.1,000 (vide measurement book 549, pages 50 and 52). As the project was not [included] in the programme of the Earthquake Reconstruction the work remains to be done up till now and the bricks [are] still lying in the kiln on the said road. Formerly the work of [laying], soling and edging of Sitamarhi Road from the 1st to 6th mile was given to Babu Premchand as he has moulded sufficient bricks on the 1st and the 2nd mile of the Sitamarhi Road. The sanctioned estimate allow[ing] carting from Muzaffarpur to [the] said Premchand was given at a scheduled rate for brick supply and no extra carting was allowed to him (vide District Engineer's memo No. 19770 dated the 16th February 1937). But in spite of

it the work was later on entrusted to Sheo Shanker Sinha without any sufficient reason, who brought bricks from Reghai Road, a distance of 14 miles. In paying off of these bricks with a lead of 14 miles average the Board has been put to a loss of Rs.4,000. In addition to this the Board will be put to a further loss in paying to Premchand his claim for Rs.2,000. Thus, in all, the Chairman in order to show favours to Sheo Shanker Sinha wasted public money to the extent of Rs.6,000.

These are the few facts which clearly show the maladministration of the District Board of Muzaffarpur, during the regime of Babu Mahesh Prasad Sinha, the present Chairman of the District Board. This extraordinary favouritism might well give rise to some suspicion that this patronage is not without a tinge of self-interest. As the matter stands at present it is necessary that the allegations contained in the aforesaid paragraphs should be thoroughly inquired into by an impartial officer of the Government and the allegations if found true after the said enquiry, the authorities of the Board be kindly asked to explain the conduct. In order that further misuse of power may not be repeated in this case, the Chairman of the District Board be kindly asked to suspend all work and payment regarding this contract.

There are other instances of favouritism and gross misuse of power of the Chairman, District Board, for which I am collecting necessary materials and the moment they are ready I shall submit them to the Government for some such action as they think proper.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,  
Thakur Ram Nandan Singh

\*Addressee not known.

11. *Excerpts from notings in a Bihar Government file on the nomination of Nurul Hasan as a Municipal Commissioner of Darbhanga*

H.M.

Letter of Mr. Nurul Hassan is in continuation of his frantic efforts to get himself nominated. I have not got the file dealing with the Darbhanga nomination before me. So far as I could recollect from memory I am noting below:

In Darbhanga Municipal election the Muslim Leaguers boycotted the election. The number of Muslims elected this year was less than that of the previous election by two. After the election was over, I received a letter from Prof. Abdul Bari through Mr. Nurul Hasan requesting me to nominate him (copy enclosed). Thereafter followed a letter from the President, District Congress Committee, which was received by H.M. on the 25th June '38 (copy

enclosed). Another letter from Babu Dharni Dhar was received the next day (copy enclosed). In both these letters there was no recommendations for the nomination of any Muslim. During discussions with local workers I could notice that they were satisfied with the election of 5 elected Muslim Commissioners on the Board and did not think further representation of Muslims to be necessary. Md. Gafoor, M.L.A., Maulvi Wadood and Prof. Abdul Bari as stated above pressed for the nomination of at least one Muslim, if not two, on the Board. I too thought the non-inclusion of Muslims in the nominated list would expose the Government to criticism, especially as the number of Muslim Commissioners returned by election is less than that of previous election. I, therefore, consulted Babu Ram Charan Singh, M.L.A., and was throughout guided by his advice in the matter of nomination as he was available at Patna. Now, the choice that was *before us was about the person to nominate as a Muslim member. There was* strong opposition from the local officers to the nomination of Mr. Nurul Hasan who was described by the Collector as a most undesirable person. On the other hand Mr. Gafoor, Maulvi Wadood and Babu Ram Charan Singh, all pressed for the nomination of Mr. Rahman. I had no mind to ignore the opinion of the District Magistrate against Mr. Nurul Hasan whose case as I have pointed out to you above was not supported even by local workers. Government have nominated defeated candidates only on very rare occasions and on very exceptional grounds which were wanting in the case of Mr. Hasan. The problem was to make the next best choice. The District Magistrate did not oppose the nomination of Mr. Rahman and he was supported as stated above by Mr. Gafoor, Mr. Wadood and Mr. Ram Charan Singh. I therefore suggested his name to H.M. which was ultimately approved by him. H.M. can very well realise my feelings in not recommending the name which was suggested by Prof. Abdul Bari. I must note that Mr. Nurul Hasan with some other men from Mr. Bari's residence frequently called on me and as Bari Saheb was absent I took pains to explain to them the reasons [for] not nominating him. It was pointed out to me by some of the workers of Darbhanga that Nurul Hasan Saheb was to be nominated simply because he was related to Bari Saheb. During that period there was acute newspaper publications (sic) against Prof. Abdul and I drew attention of Mr. Nurul Hasan to these facts and requested him not to embarrass Mr. Bari or Government by pressing his claim. This, it appears, he has made a grievance against me. I need not mention here the questionable tactics that were employed by Mr. Nurul Hasan to obtain information from the file. In the matter of Darbhanga nomination, H.M. is aware about our difficulties due to keen interest that was displayed by several important persons. I have definite information that the nomination made by H.M. has created satisfaction in the rank of the Congress and general public in Darbhanga.

Mr. Nurul Hasan's grievance is also regarding the nomination of District Inspector of Schools instead of Deputy Superintendent of Darbhanga Medical School. Government have nominated District Inspector of Schools because of the fact that the present incumbent, being a Mahomedan, would disarm the



opposition of League (as we have nominated two Muslims—one official and the other non-official) and also of the fact that services of D.I. would be more useful to the Board. I have shown this note to Babu Ram Charan Singh and Md. Gafoor, M.L.A.s, who are in agreement with its contents. If a reply is to be sent to Mr. Nurul Hasan, I would suggest that he may be informed that the Government regret that after due consideration of all the facts they were not in a position to nominate [him] as a Municipal Commissioner of Darbhanga. As Mr. Nurul Hasan threatens to go to Wardha, a copy of this note may also be sent to Rajendra Babu in advance.

B.N. Jha  
3.9.38

H.P.M. who received Mr. Hasan's representation may also see.

B.N. Jha  
3.9.38

I agree. A copy of the notes may be sent to me to be forwarded to B. Rajendra Prasad at Wardha. The H.P.M. may also see the notes above.

A.N.S.  
5.9.38

H.P.M.

For perusal. The file may be sent back to me.

B.N. Jha  
5.9.38

S.K. Sinha  
8.9.1938

12. *Suggestions made by J. Choudhry in regard to the distribution of appointments among various communities in Bihar (24 September 1938)*

CONFIDENTIAL

It is unfortunate that we in India seek appointments under Government not with a view to serve the people or state but with a view to earn money. The result is that the idea of a distribution of posts among various communities in various proportions crops up. However, we must look to things as they are. Then before arriving at a definite formula we had better decide the principle on the basis of which the formula should involve. I would like my Hon'ble colleagues to examine the following suggestions of mine:

If all the communities of our Province were equally advanced, we might safely base our formula on population basis. But as it is not so, the less advanced

communities should be allowed a certain amount of weightage and this weightage should vary inversely with the degree of advancement of various communities. Moreover, unless there be dearth of suitable hands available in our own Province, none from outside the Province should be taken. Of course, if one gets domiciled in this Province he remains no longer an outsider.

Now I see that Harijans and aborigines are the least advanced communities and deserve the most weightage. But they are so very backward that candidates even in proportion to their population are not available from amongst them and, therefore, no question of weightage arises in their cases, and H.E. has reasons to suggest that if any candidates from amongst those classes are available, they should be taken in.

Then come the various backward classes people, such as Gowalas, Kurmis, Nais, Kandus, and others. They are not Harijans and aborigines but otherwise far inferior to Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Bhumi-hars, and Kayasthas.

Then comes the place of Muhammadans and amongst them Jolahas, Dhunias, Kunjras and Momins deserve special push.

Then high class Hindus of Bihari origin enumerated above and last of all Bengalees domiciled in this Province.

Thus we shall see that Muhammadans will, according to my scheme, get a few more posts than in proportion to their population and Bengalees domiciled in Bihar will get a few less posts than what their population will warrant.

I cannot say whether 20% each to Muhammadans and Bengalees according to H.E.'s suggestion or 20% and 10% respectively to those communities according to the Hon'ble the Prime Minister and Hon'ble Minister, Finance, or 25% to Muhammadans according to H.M. Education will fit in with my formula or quite a different proportion will work out.

### 13. *Shillong Political Pamphlet No. 7*

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Shillong

11 October 1938

The last pamphlet recorded the events which followed on the resignation of the Saadulla Ministry up to the time of members leaving Shillong on 22nd September. The Assam United Party had been formed, consisting of 56 members (of whom 15 were neither Moslems nor Europeans), and they had sent a requisition to the Speaker before leaving, asking for a definite date on which the adjourned sitting might be resumed. The Speaker had circulated a printed notification to the effect that this would probably be in the second week of October; but had intimated that consultation with the Ministry was necessary.

The 12th October was mentioned verbally when members urged that their personal arrangements needed consideration.

The Congress Coalition had taken office although in a minority and that Party immediately commenced a vigorous campaign to increase their following at least by the number necessary to ensure their being able to defeat the 56 no-confidence motions tabled before the members left Shillong. This campaign had behind it all the recognised advantages of a regular organization and took the form of a daily Press campaign, and approach to leaders and individual members of the United Party, holding meetings in prominent centres, and the circulation of propaganda and rumour mostly without any foundation in fact, but calculated to disturb the less well-informed members of Saadulla's party now scattered to their constituencies.

The Executive Committee of the United Party have been in regular and frequent consultation throughout the Puja holidays and Mr. Griffiths has attended these meetings. In continuing the Press campaign the Party's Publicity Officer has sent replies to much of the thunder of the other side. It must be recognised how unfavourably we are situated. *The Statesman* has printed some, but by no means all, of what has been contributed. With the exception of the *Star of India*, the Indian Press is hostile and where they have published anything [at] all, have selected what they have considered innocuous.

The Party Group leaders have been approached and invited to join the Coalition, on the understanding that the Congress programme would be worked and this was unacceptable. Much pressure has been brought to bear on individual members and various kinds of inducement have been exerted, which need not be mentioned in detail. Accounts of meetings and the resolutions congratulating the Ministry have received general publicity while the variety of rumour which has been spread would be amusing were it not so baseless, insidious and potentially damaging. Large headlines announce the defection of whole group and the Labour member for Silchar was reported as having died.

In spite of this the Ministry is not yet disposed to meet the Assembly.

Once the Saadulla Ministry was out of office it had no Secretarial organization to fall back upon, and this office has undertaken for the time being to fill the breach. The particular object of the Committee has been to keep in touch with and to encourage all members of the Party, and it is gratifying to be able to announce that there have been no defections.

The next development was a lengthy circular from the Speaker to explain that it had been decided to resume the Session on 1st December. Various reasons have been adduced to justify this change of plan, but an obvious reason is not mentioned. This change of programme has placed the United Party at a disadvantage for it will be readily understood that the campaign to win over its members, extending over a period of ten weeks, gives extended opportunity to our opponents; and of course there is nothing to prevent a further postponement, should circumstances later on dictate such a policy. Very sad!!

The Executive Committee have spared no effort to maintain touch with the

Party, and are doing everything possible to meet the altered position. Some account of this effort may be communicated later on, but it is difficult at present to speak without reserve.

It is necessary to turn for a moment to our own constituents. A full account of the progress and development of the situation up to the 22nd September has been forwarded to Calcutta. This was considered at a meeting of the Committee held immediately before the Puja holidays, and they have not only approved of the action of the Group, but approved of it with enthusiasm. Before the Group dispersed it was arranged that members should take an early opportunity of holding meetings to explain the events leading up to the then position. It is satisfactory to learn that as the result of these meetings the Group's line of action has generally been endorsed. Correspondence has been received from many quarters and, with a few exceptions, most encouraging approval has been accorded.

One point regarding which criticism has been levelled against the European Group relates to the fact that the Group has not gone in for Press propaganda in support of its action. Since the close of the Assembly session the Group's advisers have been working in close conjunction with the other Saadulla parties and Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury, who is an excellent propagandist, has been organising the necessary publicity. Numerous letters have been issued by him to contradict the lies deliberately disseminated by the Congress Party and, in the compilation of these letters, advisers of the Group have had a full share. The difficulty in the way of *Press propaganda by the European Group itself is that the Indian papers which publish Congress propaganda will not as a rule accept letters or articles in the contrary sense from Europeans*. A letter has been drafted in reply to the latest allegations of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose but it is extremely doubtful if it will secure publication in any of the Hindu newspapers. Publication of such letters can sometimes be arranged in *The Statesman* but such publication has little or no propaganda value amongst those whom we need to influence, for many of them do not read *The Statesman*. As far as our European constituents are concerned, it is felt that it is better to reach them by means of pamphlets such as this rather than by articles in *The Statesman* which must of necessity be brief and which cannot be written as frankly as is desirable.

The action of the Assam European Group in tabling and supporting the no-confidence motions against the Bardoloi Ministry has led Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, the Congress President, to make several bitter attacks on the Group and to utter threats to the European community as a whole. The meetings of Europeans which have recently been held in Assam show that the action of the Group has met with the general approval of Assam Europeans but as there may be some members of the European Association who are still not fully aware of the facts, this pamphlet is being issued to explain the situation.

Ever since the inauguration of Provincial Autonomy the European Group has undertaken to support the Saadulla Government as long as that Government paid reasonable regard to European interests as well as to the welfare of the

Province as a whole. The Saadulla Government kept its part of the bargain very satisfactorily and gave us protection against the attacks of the Congress Party. It will be remembered that in the Assembly those attacks recently took a three-fold form: (1) the attempt to cut down European representation on local bodies; (2) the Freedom of Movement Bill; and (3) the tabling of a resolution demanding an enquiry into conditions of labour on Tea Estates. Thanks to the firm attitude of the Saadulla Government the first of these attempts was easily defeated and it is quite clear that the second attempt would also have been defeated if the Bill had been reached before the collapse of the Government. With regard to the third (resolution), it did not secure a place in the ballot. We were thus under a definite obligation to fulfil our part of the bargain and should have been bound by honour as well as by our own interests to oppose the no-confidence motion tabled by the Congress on the 12th September 1938, against the Saadulla Government.

Unfortunately the controversy over the Gauhati-Shillong Motor Service contract led to a large-scale campaign against the Ministry; that campaign, in which intrigue and corruption were the principal weapons, had a certain temporary effect and a number of Saadulla's supporters went over to the Opposition. At this stage the Saadulla Ministry resigned and Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi, the Congress Leader, was asked to form a Government. The defaulters from the Saadulla Party were horrified when they realised that their action had put the Congress Party in office and most of them promptly returned to the Saadulla fold. It then became apparent that Bardoloi Ministry would be in a minority and His Excellency the Governor was therefore asked to re-call Saadulla and commission him to form a fresh Ministry. To this request it was not possible for His Excellency to accede; however mistaken Saadulla's resignation may have been, Mr. Bardoloi had been quite correctly asked to form a Ministry and was entitled to proceed with its formation unless and until a vote of the Assembly proved him to be in a minority. At the same time it was clearly wrong that a minority Government should continue in office and it was, therefore, necessary that no-confidence motions should be filed against the new Government. Five such motions were accordingly tabled on the 19th September, including one from the European Group. It will be realised that this was merely the opposite side of the picture from that presented to the European Group on the 12th September. On the 12th September the Group would have been bound to support Saadulla against a no-confidence motion; on the 19th September, the Bardoloi Ministry having obtained power as a result of purely temporary causes, the no-confidence motions had to be tabled by the Saadulla Coalition. In each case the issue was the same; namely, whether the Saadulla or the Bardoloi Coalition should hold office. Every logical consideration which justified the Group's attitude on the 12th September equally justified and necessitated its action on the 19th September.

From this point onwards the facts are fairly well known. Mr. Bardoloi had every reason to expect defeat and was determined at all costs not to face the

Assembly. Indeed there are grounds for believing that Mr. Bardoloi himself would have preferred to abandon the attempt to form a Ministry but was compelled to continue by Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, the Congress President. There is also reason to believe that Mr. Bose's action subsequently met with the emphatic disapproval of the Congress Parliamentary Board, which nevertheless felt bound not to disavow his action openly. In pursuance of his determination to avoid a division, Mr. Bardoloi persuaded the Speaker to adjourn the Assembly *sine die*. It is not proposed in this pamphlet to discuss the legal aspects of the matter or to describe all that took place behind the scenes. It need only be said that on the following day the Bardoloi Ministry was sworn in and at the same time the Speaker issued a notice declaring his intention of re-calling the Assembly about the 12th October. Great efforts were then made by the Congress Party to prevent the meeting of the Assembly at an early date and eventually the Speaker resiled from his [former] position and announced his intention of calling the Assembly on the 1st December.

It is not difficult to understand the motives which led the Congress Party to postpone the meeting of the Assembly as long as possible. Quite apart from their very real danger of defeat if the Assembly meets now, there is also the fact that waverers tend to rally to the Party which appears to hold the whip-hand. By a judicious use of the Governmental patronage the Congress Party may very easily be able to consolidate its position if it can stay in power for a few months without facing the Assembly. At present, out of 107 members of the Assembly, 56 are definitely supporters of the Saadulla Party and actually tabled no-confidence motions against the Bardoloi Ministry on the 20th September after the swearing in of that Ministry. Every possible method is being employed by the Congress Party to detach members from their allegiance to Saadulla but so far his adherents have remained firm.

Petitions have been filed to His Excellency the Governor asking him to use his special powers and insist on a meeting of the Assembly at an early date to discuss the no-confidence motions. Every member of the Saadulla Party has been asked to file such a petition and 53 members out of 56 have already done so. There is every reason to expect that requisitions from the other three will be received in the course of the next day or two.

It now remains to consider the propriety of the action of the European Group and to discuss the criticisms which have been levelled against that Group from some quarters. In theory three possible courses of action were open to the Group when the crisis occurred: (1) they could have supported the Congress; (2) they could have remained neutral; and (3) they could have supported Saadulla, as in fact they did.

Those who say that the Group should have followed the first of these three courses of action appear to think that by supporting the Bardoloi Ministry it would have been possible for the European Group to buy off the Congress from attacks on the Tea and other industries. This argument, however, overlooks the fact that throughout the last eighteen months the Congress Party has consistently

followed a policy which, if put into action, would have been detrimental to the European interests concerned. The Freedom of Movement Bill, the reduction of European representation on local bodies, and the proposed Tea Labour Enquiry, are the examples which spring most readily to mind, but even apart from these matters, it would have been impossible for the European Group to support the avowed Congress policy of wholesale reduction of land revenue, complete Prohibition and the separation of Sylhet. Any support promised by the Group to the Congress Party would necessarily have been purely theoretical support and whenever concrete issues arose the chances are that the Group would have found itself compelled to oppose the Congress proposals. It is most unlikely that the Congress Party would have agreed to suspend any activities detrimental to our interests merely because we offered them a theoretical support which could rarely be translated into practical effect. It is moreover to be remembered that when the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the European Group met Mr. Bardoloi after the downfall of the Saadulla Coalition Ministry, but immediately before he submitted his numbers to the Governor, the Congress Leader was quite unable to say that there would be any change in the policy of the Congress in Assam. Indeed he went out of his way to explain that policy would be determined by the All-India Congress Working Committee, and it would not be within the power of the Congress Party in Assam to modify that programme. There is, therefore, no substance in the contention that by supporting the Congress Ministry the European Group could have purchased immunity from attack [on] European interests in the Province. Even had such a bargain been possible it does not seem likely that it would have paid us in the long run. As things stand in Assam today, even if the Congress Ministry succeeds in establishing itself for the time being, its majority will be a very slender one and it is by no means impossible that in a few months' time we may see another Saadulla Ministry in office again. What would our position be then if we had deserted in the hour of need who had loyally stood by us throughout the past eighteen months?

The second suggestion is that the European Group might have remained neutral and announced its intention of supporting whichever Party won in the contest between Saadulla and Bardoloi. Those who advocate this course would apparently argue that it is not the business of Europeans to assist in deciding which Party is to rule the Province. This argument seems to rest on the assumption that the position of the European group in the Assembly is fundamentally different from that of other Parties, and that the Group is only there to protect European interests when they are specifically threatened. Even if this were true—and its truth is most emphatically denied by the Group—to admit it would be to give away the whole case for [a] European representation out of proportion to the numbers of our community. The case for our strong representation is based on the assumption that we are intimately concerned with everything affecting the welfare of the Province and it is therefore just as incumbent upon us as upon any other Group to exercise our judgment as to what particular Ministry is most likely to serve the interests of the Province.

Apart from these abstract considerations, the fact remains that the Saadulla group had completely lost heart after the resignation of the Chief Minister and would never have adopted a fighting attitude unless the European Group had provided the necessary stiffening. The Congress Party realised this fact and tried to add to the discomfiture of the supporters of Saadulla by deliberately spreading false rumours to the effect that the European Group remained silent then; there is little doubt that the Saadulla Party would have collapsed and Congress would have romped home. Neutrality would have had just the same effect as active support of the Congress Party,—it would have lost us friendship of the former Government Party and would have ensured the success of Congress. Nothing remained for the European Group therefore except the course of action which was in fact followed.

Much remains to be done. Real difficulties lie ahead of us, and these will have to be countered. For the present, however, our course is clear, namely, to continue the line of action we have agreed upon and to help those elements in the Party which have to face the pressure of public opinion and social ostracism in a degree impossible to enlarge upon in this pamphlet.

It will be our endeavour so far as possible to keep our constituents posted with the progress of events from time to time.

Political Secretary

14. *Extract from "The Hindusthan Standard" dated October 25th, 1938, on the medium of instruction in primary schools in Bihar*

In the areas where Bengali is the spoken language, Babu Rajendra Prasad has suggested that the medium of instruction in primary schools should be Bengali. But in such areas also provision should be made for instruction in Hindusthani in the primary schools for those whose mother-tongue is Hindusthani, if there is [a] reasonable number of students speaking Hindusthani. Similarly in Hindusthani-speaking areas, education in primary schools should be given in Hindusthani but if there is [a] reasonable number of students speaking Bengali they should be taught [in] Bengali. In secondary schools education should be given through the medium of any other language unless there is a demand for it on the part of the residents of any district where another language is spoken. It should grant aid to private institutions in the Bengali-speaking areas teaching through the medium of Bengali. Examination papers may, however, be answered in any other language of the province.

Babu Rajendra Prasad thinks that all non-Hindusthani speaking students should on national grounds be required to acquire at a suitable stage a working knowledge of Hindusthani for inter-provincial dealings.



15. *Bengali-Bihari Controversy*

The Working Committee have considered the report of Babu Rajendra Prasad in regard to the Bengali-Bihari controversy and also various memoranda, including one from Mr. P.R. Das. The Committee wish to express their appreciation of the careful and exhaustive report prepared by Babu Rajendra Prasad and their general agreement with the conclusions arrived at by him. In view of the fact that several of these conclusions are capable of general application, the Committee formulate them hereunder.

1. While the Committee are of opinion that the rich variety of Indian culture and diversity of life in the various parts of the country should be preserved and cherished, the idea of a common nationality and a common background of our cultural and historical inheritance must always be encouraged, so that India should become a free and strong nation built upon a unity of purpose and aim. Therefore the Committee wish to discourage all separatist tendencies and a narrow provincialism. Nevertheless, the Committee are of opinion that in regard to services and like matters the people of a Province have a certain claim which cannot be overlooked.

2. In regard to services the Committee are of opinion that there should be no bar preventing the employment of any Indian, living in any part of the country, from seeking employment in any other part. But certain considerations must govern such employment, apart from the essential condition of merit and efficiency, which is of particular importance in the higher services and in the selection of specialists and experts. These considerations are:

- (i) A fair representation of various communities in the Province.
- (ii) The encouragement, as far as possible, of backward classes and groups so that they might develop and play their full part in the national life.
- (iii) A preferential treatment of the people of the Province. It is desirable that this preferential treatment should be governed by certain rules and regulations framed by Provincial Governments in order to prevent individual officers from applying different standards. Further, it is desirable that similar rules should be applicable in all Provinces.

3. In regard to Bihar no distinction should be made between Biharis properly so called and the Bengali-speaking residents of the Province born or domiciled there. The term Bihari should in fact include both these classes and in the matter of services, as well as other matters, an identical treatment should be given to both. It is permissible to give a certain preference in services to these residents of the Province over people from other Provinces.

4. The practice of issuing certificates to domiciles should be abolished. Applicants for services should state that they are residents of or domiciled in the Province. In all appropriate cases the Government will have the right to satisfy itself about the correctness of the statement before making an appointment.

5. Domicile should be proved by evidence that implies that the applicant has made the Province his home. In deciding that he has done so, length of residence, possession of house or other property, and other relevant matters should be taken into consideration and the conclusions arrived at on the totality of the evidence available. However, birth in the Province or ten years' continuous residence should be regarded as sufficient proof of domicile.

6. All persons holding appointments under Government should be treated alike and promotions must be based on seniority coupled with efficiency.

7. There should be no prohibition against anyone carrying on trade or business in the Province. It is desirable that firms and factories, carrying on business in a Province, should develop local contacts by giving appointments, wherever possible, to residents of the Province. But suggestions made by Provincial Governments to firms and factories in the matter of appointment may be misunderstood and therefore should be avoided.

8. When accommodation is limited in educational institutions, places may be reserved for different communities in the Province but the reservation should be in a fair proportion. Preference in such educational institutions may be given to people of the Province.

9. In Bihar in the areas where Bengali is the spoken language, the medium of instruction in primary schools should be Bengali, but in such areas provision should also be made for instruction in Hindustani in the primary schools, if there is a reasonable number of students speaking Hindustani. Similarly in Hindustani-speaking areas, education in primary schools should be given in Hindustani, but, if there is a reasonable number of Bengali-speaking students, they should be taught in Bengali. In secondary schools education should be given through the medium of the language of the Province, but the State should provide for education through the medium of any other language, where there is a demand for it on the part of the residents of any district where this other language is spoken.

10. The Working Committee earnestly trust that the above conclusions will be accepted and acted upon by all the parties concerned in Bihar and the regrettable controversy in the Province will cease.

11. The conclusions should also guide the general policy of other provincial administrations in the matters herein dealt with.

#### 16. *The Bihar Ministry's Work—A Retrospect (Bulletin issued by the Information Officer, Government of Bihar)*

Since the issue of the last Bulletin two months ago much has happened to justify a stock-taking of the activities of the Bihar Ministry, so that the public at large may know as to what has been done and what is proposed to be done. In this Bulletin, therefore, a brief review of the measures accomplished and the measures

under contemplation will be attempted.

#### RELIEF TO TENANTRY

The problems of the peasantry and the land have been in the forefront of the Ministry's programme and in this connection the first legislative measure enacted by the Ministry is the Bihar Tenancy (Amendment) Act. This is calculated to mitigate the hardship of the tenantry of the Province on account of the operations of some of the provisions of the old law and to give them such relief as they immediately need.

The measures of relief which the new Tenancy Act affords to the raiyats are summarised below:

1. Occupancy raiyats have been given the great facility of the partition among co-tenants being recognised by the superior landlord. Only when the latter may have any objection to the distribution of rent by the co-tenants among themselves he can apply to the Collector for the distribution of the rent of the holding.

2. The Tenancy Act as it stood before left it discretionary with the court to admit or reject an application for [commutation] of produce rent. The new law makes it obligatory on the court to commute when a raiyat applies for it. Only when on the landlord's application it is objected to by the raiyat that the court can exercise its discretion about admitting or rejecting the application.

3. The system of produce rent payable by a raiyat on the estimated value of the crop of a holding, commonly known as *danabandi*, which was unpopular with the tenants, has been abolished. All *danabandi* holdings shall, from the date of the passing of this Act, be considered to be liable to payment of rent in kind by division of the produce of the holding, and in all cases where the rent is payable by division of produce, the distribution shall be in the proportion of 22 to the raiyat and 18 to the landlord. On a notification by Government [commutation] of produce rent in any particular area or for any particular class of occupancy raiyats can be taken up by the Collector either on the application of the landlord or the raiyat or on his own motion.

4. The rate of interest on arrears of rent has been reduced from  $12\frac{1}{2}$  to  $6\frac{1}{4}$  per cent per annum and the provision about the payment of damages which used to amount to 25 per cent of the rent due has been deleted.

5. Illegal exactions (*abwabs*) have been made a penal offence with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to 6 months or with fine which may extend to Rs.500, or with both.

6. On account of the world-wide economic depression, which commenced in 1929, the prices of agricultural produce have gone down by more than 50 per cent and it has become difficult for the raiyats to bear the burden of the existing rents, particularly rents enhanced either by the court or through private contract or commuted under section 40 of the old Act, or settled for new holdings, taking into consideration the high prices of staple food crops prevailing in 1911. There are also instances in which high rents were fixed in consideration of the landlords'

maintaining the sources of irrigation but the same rents are being realised although the arrangements for irrigation have been neglected by the landlords. With a view, therefore, to giving relief to the raiyats in such cases a new section 112A has been incorporated in the Act under which a raiyat can now apply (a) for cancellation of all enhancements made between 1911 and 1936; (b) for reduction of all rents commuted under section 40 or by agreement between 1911 and 1936, which will be in the proportion to the fall in the prices of staple food crops; (c) for partial or entire remission of rent on the ground of permanent or temporary deterioration of the soil of the raiyat's holding due to a deposit of sand, by submersion under water, etc., or on the ground that the landlord has failed to carry out the arrangements in respect of irrigation which he is bound to maintain; and (d) for reduction of rent due to the fall in the prices not due to temporary causes. On a notification by Government, action may be taken by the Collector *suo motu* in respect of all the points enumerated above as well as in such cases as may be specified in a notification issued for sufficient reasons by the Governor in this behalf.

7. In execution proceedings for arrears of rent no raiyat can now be detained in civil jail and his movable property cannot be attached except with his consent in writing unless the decree cannot be satisfied by the attachment and sale of the holding for the arrears of the rent for which the decree was passed.

8. As regards the sale of the holding itself in execution of a decree for rent, only so much of the holding can now be put to sale as may be deemed sufficient to satisfy the decretal amount. The necessary valuation of the holding or part thereof to be sold will be made by the court after hearing the parties and no holding or any portion thereof shall be sold for a price lower than that specified in the sale proclamation.

9. The houses and other holdings with the materials and the sites thereof and the land immediately appurtenant thereto and necessary for their enjoyment belonging to a raiyat or under-raiyat and occupied by him will be exempt from sale in the execution of a rent decree except where the decree is for arrears of rent due in respect of the site of such house or building.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY BILL TO AFFORD FURTHER RELIEF

A supplementary Bill will soon be brought forward by the Ministry to deal with matters not covered by the present legislation in order to afford further measures of relief to the raiyats. This Bill will deal with such matters as realisation of rent by certificate procedure, restoration of *bakhast* lands, abolition of *salami*, the tenants' right to bamboos and fruits and timber of trees, and remission of arrears of rent.

#### TENANCY LEGISLATION FOR CHHOTANAGPUR

A Tenancy Bill on the same lines as the Bihar Tenancy Act in order to meet the needs of the raiyats of Chhotanagpur has been introduced by the Ministry in the

Assembly and is now in the Select Committee stage.

#### LEGISLATION TO REGULATE SUGAR INDUSTRY

In the sphere of legislation the Ministry has been able to put on the statute book another important measure to regulate the development of the sugar industry in the Province.

Bihar is next in importance only to the United Provinces so far as the sugar industry is concerned, producing 29 per cent of the total output of white sugar in India. With the increasing growth of the industry many problems had arisen of late which needed immediate solution in order to ensure the development of the industry on sound lines both in the interests of the grower and the industry as a whole. The Sugar Factories Control Act has been passed with the object of enabling Government with the cooperation of the industry to tackle these problems.

The Act provides for the licensing of sugar factories, the regulation of the supply of sugarcane to factories, the fixation of the minimum price for sugarcane, the establishment of a Sugar Control Board and Advisory Committees and a tax on the sale of sugarcane intended for use in factories.

An unsatisfactory feature of the sugar industry has been the growth of unhealthy competition which has brought down the price of sugar to a very low level. As a direct consequence the price of sugarcane has fallen to such an extent that during the last crushing season the price obtained by the cultivator hardly covered the cost of cultivation. It is, therefore, necessary to regulate the production of sugar by providing for the licensing of factories. There will be two forms of licence, one for the construction of new factories or the extension of the plant of the existing factories, and the other for crushing cane. The latter form of licence will be granted subject to certain conditions relating to the sale of sugar, membership of the Sugar Syndicate, the central marketing organisation of the industry recognised by Government, and the quantity of cane to be crushed by the factory. These conditions will ensure normal working, without which growers are likely to suffer.

As regards the regulation of the supply of cane to factories, provision has been made for the purchase of cane in an area (zone) reserved for a factory, in an area assigned to a factory and in areas which are neither reserved nor assigned. A common feature of reserved and assigned areas is compulsory bonding, i.e., the factory is required to enter into agreements with cane-growers or cane-growers' cooperative societies for the purchase of a specified quantity of cane. In an area which is neither specified nor assigned, bonding is not compulsory. What is aimed at is the concentration of cane supply as far as possible within reserved areas or assigned areas and the gradual conversion of assigned areas into reserved areas. It is proposed that each factory should have a prescribed proportion (say 60 per cent in the beginning which may,

however, be raised to 70 or 75 per cent) of bonded supply, i.e., a supply of cane under agreement. A survey will be undertaken in order to obtain reliable estimates of cane areas. Middlemen will not be allowed to function in a reserved area. But in an assigned area and in an area which is neither reserved nor assigned the factory may purchase through middlemen specially licensed for the purpose. The system of 'bonded' cane will lead to better organisation of cane supplies and relieve growers from anxiety regarding the disposal of their cane. With the organisation of cane-growers' cooperative societies they will be able to safeguard their own interests and some of the provisions of the Act have been framed with the object of encouraging the organisation of such societies.

Regarding the fixation of the minimum price for sugarcane intended for use in a factory, a wide latitude has been given to the Provincial Government to vary the minimum price and to prescribe rules to determine how the minimum price shall be calculated. Provision is also made for the payment of an additional price for special varieties of cane.

A Sugar Control Board with the Hon'ble Minister of Education and Development, Bihar, as ex-officio Chairman and with representatives of the United Provinces Government and representatives of cane-growers and factories from both Provinces on it has been set up to deal with the major problems of the industry such as the licensing of factories, the determination of the conditions of the licence and the fixation of the minimum price of cane.

Advisory Committees will also be appointed to deal with local problems such as the preparation of the estimates of cane requirements of factories, the declaration of reserved and assigned areas, the licensing of purchasing agents, etc.

In order to enable a big drive to be launched for the improvement of cane cultivation and its planned production on a rational basis, the Provincial Government has been given the power to impose a tax on the sale of sugarcane to a factory or a cess on the entry of cane into a local area. The proceeds of this tax, if it is imposed by the Provincial Government, will be utilised mainly for the direct benefit of the industry.

#### COMMITTEE ON UTILISATION OF MOLASSES

The Government of Bihar, in consultation with the Government of the United Provinces, has set up a Joint Committee to devise ways and means of starting the manufacture of power alcohol out of molasses, to report on the best method of manufacture and of mixing power alcohol with petrol and to explore the possible uses for molasses and their practical application.

The Committee will consist of Dr. N.R. Dha, Mr. G.H. Dickson, Mr. Ananthasubramanyam, Dr. P.S. Maker, Lala Padampat Singhania, Mr. M.P. Gandhi, Dr. S.S. Bhatnagar and Dr. N.G. Chatterji.

## RELIEF TO DEBTORS

The two other Bills sponsored by the Ministry and referred to Joint Select Committees of both Houses of the Provincial Legislature are the Bihar Money-lenders' Bill intended to give relief to the debtors, to prevent the exaction of usurious rates of interest and to regulate the business of money-lending in the Province and the Bihar Agricultural Income-tax Bill designed to raise additional revenue for the purpose of extending the beneficent activities of Government.

The Money-lenders' Bill provides for the registration of money-lenders on payment of a small fee. No one who is not a registered money-lender can institute a suit for the recovery of his dues from the debtor. It is also provided that if a registered money-lender is found guilty of fraud or not keeping his accounts properly, orders may be passed cancelling his registration.

It is also proposed to make the keeping of proper accounts by money-lenders compulsory, to require a money-lender to give the debtor a copy of the recorded account within 7 days of advancing the loan, to give a receipt for every sum paid by the debtor, and also to require the money-lender to furnish a statement of account to the debtor at least once in every year. Non-compliance has been made punishable with fine.

In order to check the levying of excessive interest it is provided in the Bill that no court shall pass a decree on account of arrears of interest for any period exceeding three years or at rates exceeding 9 per cent per annum in the case of a secured loan and 12 per cent per annum in the case of an unsecured loan but the money-lender is given power to institute a suit for the recovery of interest only without claiming payment of the principal.

In order to make it possible for the debtor to pay off the decretal amount it is provided that on the application of the judgement-debtor the court may, in respect of any decree, fix suitable instalments for the payment of the decretal amount according to the circumstances of each case. It is also provided that in case of the sale of the judgement-debtor's lands in execution of a decree not more than 1/3rd of his lands subject to a minimum of 1 acre shall be exempt from sale.

It is proposed to make the practice of entering in the handnote, bond or *khatabahi* a sum greater than actually lent an offence punishable with fine.

To prevent the filing of suits outside the Province for recovery of debts it is provided that any contract between the money-lender and the debtor providing for the payment of the amount outside the Province shall be void.

## ANOTHER BILL TO DEAL WITH RURAL INDEBTEDNESS

The Ministry will soon bring forward another comprehensive Bill to deal with rural indebtedness and to give relief to agricultural debtors.

## RAISING ADDITIONAL REVENUE FOR BETTERMENT OF RURAL POPULATION

Government consider that as provincial revenues are so small, they have no alternative but to utilise the additional source of revenue—taxes on agricultural

income—which has been assigned to them under the Government of India Act. They see no reason why those persons who obtain large or relatively large incomes from agriculture should not pay tax on those incomes. The Agricultural Income-tax Bill has, therefore, been brought forward for the purpose of obtaining additional revenue [which] will be utilised mainly for the betterment of the rural population and extending the beneficent activities of Government in that direction.

The Bill provides for the levy of agricultural income-tax on agricultural income as defined (with a small alteration to suit local conditions) in the Indian Income-tax Act, 1922. As, however, Government recognise that in respect of agricultural income the exemption limit should be considerably higher than in the case of ordinary income, the exemption limit in the Bill has been fixed at Rs.5,000. An agricultural income below this figure will not be taxed.

Rates of agricultural income-tax in respect of incomes above Rs.30,000 are proposed at the same rates as those fixed in the Indian Income-tax Act, 1922. The rates for incomes over Rs.30,000 are higher than those in the Indian Income-tax Act, but as no provision is made for the levy of super-tax on agricultural income, the actual tax payable on agricultural income over Rs.30,000 is in all cases smaller and in the case of higher incomes considerably smaller than the tax (taking income-tax and super-tax together) payable under the Indian Income-tax Act on other incomes of a smaller size.

The rates of agricultural income-tax proposed are higher in the case of larger incomes than in the case of smaller. Government recognise that, if no safeguard was provided, this might result in the splitting up of Hindu undivided families. Provision has, therefore, been made in the Bill that the income of a joint family consisting of brothers (or sons of brothers when one or more of several brothers is dead) shall be assessed at the rate that would be applicable to the separate income of brothers if they had separated and did not form a joint family.

Assessment will be made on agricultural income in the following manner:

(1) In the case of income from cultivation the assessee will have two options:

- (a) he can be assessed by presumption, that is, his income will be assumed to be a certain multiple of his rent or cess valuation. This multiple will be fixed by the Board of Agricultural Income-tax for each district subject to a maximum of 8 times;
- (b) he can file papers to show his net income.

If he does not file papers, assessment will be in the manner under (a).

(2) In the case of all other agricultural income, the assessment will be on the income accruing after making the following deductions:

- (a) the actual sum paid during the year on account either as land revenue or cess or municipal rates;



- (h) a sum calculated at 10 per cent of the actual realisations as estimated cost of collection. No one (other than a company) will be liable to pay agricultural income-tax in any year unless he is called upon by the Agricultural Income-tax Officer to file an assessment form.

Rates of the proposed agricultural income-tax as provided in the Bill are as below:

1. When the total income is Rs.5,000 or upwards, but is less than Rs. 10,000—Nine pies in the rupee.
2. When the total income is Rs.10,000 or upwards, but is less than Rs. 15,000—One anna in the rupee.
3. When the total income is Rs. 15,000 or upwards, but is less than Rs.20,000—One anna and four pies in the rupee.
4. When the total income is Rs.20,000 or upwards, but is less than Rs.30,000—One anna and seven pies in the rupee.
5. When the total income is Rs.30,000 or upwards, but is less than Rs.40,000—Two annas in the rupee.
6. When the total income is Rs.40,000 or upwards, but is less than Rs.75,000—Two annas and two pies in the rupee.
7. When the total income is Rs.75,000 or upwards, but is less than Rs.1,00,000—Two annas and four pies in the rupee.
8. When the total income is Rs.1,00,000 or upwards, but is less than Rs.2,50,000—Two annas and six pies in the rupee.
9. When the total income is Rs.2,50,000 or upwards, but is less than Rs.5,00,000—Three annas in the rupee.
10. When the total income is Rs.5,00,000 or upwards, but is less than Rs.15,00,000—Three annas and six pies in the rupee.
11. When the total income is Rs.15,00,000 or upwards—Four annas in the rupee.

#### SCHEME OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

A scheme of agricultural development is under contemplation, so that the Department of Agriculture may be able to render better service to the cultivators than it has done in the past.

It is, therefore, proposed to make the work of this Department really effective by broad-basing its activities on a police thana in each district as the basic unit with the necessary complement of trained staff. In order to make a start with properly trained staff and to keep the cost of such training as low as possible, Government propose to enter into mutual arrangements with the United Provinces Government, whereby students from Bihar will be admitted every year into the Agricultural College of the United Provinces Government and in return the Government of Bihar will admit a similar number of U.P. students into their

Veterinary College. This will ensure a steady supply of properly trained agricultural graduates.

Further, in order that the subordinate staff recruited for the Department should have some first-hand knowledge of the actual methods employed by the cultivators in crop production and also of the conditions and limitations under which they work, it is proposed that every new recruit should be trained for two years in a central farm and will then be required to study the methods of cultivation followed by the ordinary cultivator. With this end in view it is proposed to recruit 20 overseers at a recurring cost of nearly Rs.16,350 per annum and put them under training in the manner indicated above, so that in three years' time a batch of better trained overseers will be available for the development which the scheme visualises.

In the meantime it is proposed that a start in intensive demonstration work should be made with the existing staff. For this purpose one police thana in each district is to be selected immediately and one overseer and 3 kamdars are to be allotted to each area. These men will carry out intensive demonstration work, particularly on sugarcane, wheat, rice, fruits and irrigation appliances such as Rahat pumps. The Department will also encourage subsidiary agricultural industries and the cultivation of fruit trees.

Arrangements will also be made to popularise the use of improved seeds and implements and of manures. It is hoped that the concentration of the activities of the Department in a few selected thanas (one in each district) will yield better results. The expansion of the activities of the Department can be considered later as trained staff become available.

The chemical section of the Department is being ordered to speed up its work on soil survey of the Province in order to know in what areas what plant food is lacking, so that a schedule of manuring the more important crops can be drawn up for the guidance of the cultivators.

#### RURAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Connected with the scheme for intensive agricultural demonstration, it is proposed to introduce a comprehensive scheme of all-round rural development in one selected thana in each district. The details of this scheme are now being worked out with the Heads of the Development Departments.

#### COMMITTEE TO ENQUIRE INTO SANTAL PARGANAS ADMINISTRATION

Government have appointed a Committee to enquire into the system of administration in the Santal Parganas and to suggest such changes and improvements in it as will best conduce to the well-being of the inhabitants.

#### LABOUR ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

Government propose to appoint soon a Committee to enquire and report on

conditions of life and work of labour both in rural and urban areas of the Province. Already a good deal of spade-work in the form of collection of data has been done in this connection. Government are anxious to promote the welfare and to improve the lot of labour in the Province and towards this end will encourage the formation of trade unions on sound and efficient lines.

#### PROPOSALS FOR PRISON REFORMS

Proposals are under consideration to improve the administration of jails in the Province. The main questions of policy which have been under the consideration of the Ministry are:

1. The introduction of new forms of industry with a view to reducing the expenditure on jails and also with a view to enabling certain tasks which are considered to be degrading to be abolished. The Director of Industries has prepared a minute on the subject. Instructions have also been issued to the Inspector-General to take steps for the abolition of oil-presses. The mustard oil consumed in jails will in future be purchased and the prisoners, who have hitherto been employed in producing it, will be employed in other and, it is hoped, more remunerative tasks.

2. The reduction of the jail population: Superintendents of jails have been asked to ascertain and report how many prisoners there are whose sentences can be reviewed under rule 529 of the Jails Manual.

3. For some years it has been necessary to detain a certain number of criminal lunatics in jails, as no accommodation is available for them in the Indian Mental Hospital at Ranchi. Particulars regarding such prisoners are being collected in order that it may be decided whether some of them cannot be released and whether the treatment which those of them who must continue to be detained are receiving cannot be improved on.

#### TACKLING UNEMPLOYMENT

In order to tackle the problem of unemployment and provide more facilities for vocational training, schemes are under consideration for the establishment of an Institute on the lines of the Gulzarbagh Cottage Industries Institute at Pusa and Purulia, for the introduction of industrial classes in more middle English schools, for the introduction of science and manual training classes in high schools, and for the provision of training in weaving and basket-making of women workers who are excluded from underground work in mines.

The rural development scheme, which is under contemplation, will provide opportunities of useful employment to a large number of educated young men of the Province in their own localities. Besides, schemes of reorganisation of training and recruitment in the Cooperative and Agriculture Departments will further extend the avenues of employment for educated young men of the Province.

It is also proposed to make a grant to the All-India Spinners' Association, to increase the number of girls' middle English schools and to award special scholarships to Harijan students.

#### COMMITTEE TO SURVEY WHOLE FIELD OF EDUCATION

The Ministry is considering the resolution moved by Dr. Rajendra Prasad in the Senate of the Patna University for the appointment of a committee to survey the whole field of education and it is proposed to appoint a committee which will examine the whole field of education in the Province and consider what reforms are necessary in order to bring education into closer relation with the needs of the people.

#### RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

In pursuance of the policy of release of political prisoners, 18 political prisoners have, so far, been released, while cases of the remaining 24 are under consideration.

There is no ban now on any association and no newspaper is working under security.

#### MEASURES TO IMPROVE CHAUKIDARI ADMINISTRATION

The commissioners have been consulted on measures to improve chaukidari administration and their replies are under consideration. The increase in the maximum amount which can be assessed on a particular individual by fifty per cent, is one of the matters which are being examined and the best method of getting a fairer assessment, particularly in Chhotanagpur, is being considered.

#### PROVISION TO IMPRESS TRANSPORT REPEALED

It has been decided to repeal Section 8 of the Bengal Regulation XI of 1806 which enables transport to be impressed for officers and travellers.

#### RETRENCHMENT PROPOSALS COMMITTEE TO BE APPOINTED

Government are at present busy considering various proposals to reduce the cost of the administration wherever possible by retrenchment and every effort is being made to eliminate waste and effect economy in expenditure. Proposals are under consideration to lower the scale of travelling allowance and cut down compensatory and special allowances and effect economy in the Public Works Department. Government are also considering the question of appointing a Retrenchment Committee to examine in detail retrenchment proposals in various departments and suggest directions in which expenditure can be reduced.

### PROHIBITION TO BE STARTED IN SELECTED AREAS

The Ministry proposes to make a beginning in prohibition in selected areas.

### IMPROVING ACTIVITIES OF DISTRICT BOARDS

Government are examining the possibility of improving the activities of District Boards in the Province. They consider that by suitable reorganisation, the District Boards will be in a position to render better service to the rural population than is done at present and improvements are chiefly necessary under the following three broad heads: (1) Medical relief in rural areas, (2) rural sanitation and general public health measures in rural areas, and (3) the establishment of Union Boards on an extensive scale with more responsibilities delegated to them so as to serve as really useful units for the amelioration of the condition of the masses.

The District Boards have been circularised to carry out these improvements and to make enhanced provisions for rural medical and public health measures in their next budgets by effecting some immediate reductions under other heads of expenditure.

Government have also advocated to the District Boards the scheme of subsidising medical practitioners so as to induce them to settle down in rural areas and to establish a private practice there.

### BAN ON NATIONAL FLAG LIFTED

In view of the altered political situation in the country the Ministry has passed orders cancelling the circular issued in 1930 banning the hoisting of the National Flag by local bodies over their buildings. Under these new orders local bodies will be free to hoist the National Flag over their buildings.

### ELECTRIFICATION SCHEME FOR RURAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Bihar is rich in mineral deposits and resources with her coal, iron ore, mica and copper mines lying in Chhotanagpur. Besides other important minerals produced in the Province are manganese ore, ochre, chromite ore, china clay, asbestos, slate, limestone, steatite and gold. But most of these mineral resources have not yet been developed, and with a proper scheme of development these resources can be utilised for the benefit of the Province so as to contribute to her industrial prosperity.

Bihar is also the granary of the East with her most fertile lands in North Bihar known as the "garden of India", but cultivation suffers much from drought and flood. There are also hundreds of miles of chaur lands which need drainage and for want of which have been lying waste.

In order, therefore, to tackle these two important problems an electrification

scheme both for purposes of industrial and agricultural development is under contemplation. Sir William Stampe of the U.P. fame was invited to advise the Ministry on this matter. Extensive enquiry is proceeding and one of the world's best engineers has been consulted.

#### TACKLING FLOOD PROBLEM

The proceedings of the Flood Conference recently convened by Government to consider measures of flood control are under compilation and after they are printed Government will decide what action to take on the various suggestions made.

#### DRAINAGE OF CHAURS AND RECLAMATION

Closely interlinked with the problem of flood prevention in North Bihar is the question of drainage of swamps and chaurs in order to reclaim such areas for purposes of cultivation.

The Bharathus Chaur drainage project in the district of Muzaffarpur has been successfully completed, as a result of which inundation of about 30 sq. miles will be relieved to a great extent and about 10 sq. miles of perpetually water-logged and swamp area will be brought under cultivation. Already a large part of the chaur except the deepest portion and the area where there is dense growth of water hyacinth has been sown with paddy crops. Over a period of 30 to 40 years the people had not been able to grow any crops in the chaur area.

#### NEW RULES FOR CINEMAS TO SECURE SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC

Government have issued a new set of rules for the regulation of cinema houses in the Province. The old rules, which were framed in 1920, had become out of date and were not sufficient to secure the safety of the public when attending cinema shows. The revision was undertaken when the cinema disaster at Hyderabad in 1936 showed the need for enforcing adequate regulations.

The new rules make important provisions requiring expert inspection of the electrical installations of cinema houses and improvements in the arrangement of the building, so that a cinema hall can be emptied of the audience immediately on the occurrence of fire or any other sudden emergency. The existing cinema houses will be given a period of six months in which to make the necessary structural alterations.

#### LOCAL BODIES EMPLOYEES ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN CONGRESS MEETINGS

The Ministry has passed orders removing the ban imposed since 1923 on employees of local bodies prohibiting them from participating or assisting in Congress meetings.

## BIHARIS IN LOCAL BODIES

Government have issued a circular to all Commissioners of Divisions that all appointments under local bodies should be given to the natives of the Province or those domiciled therein in preference to any outside candidates even though the latter may have better and higher qualifications.

## RETIRED GOVERNMENT SERVANTS ELIGIBLE FOR ELECTION

Retired Government servants are at liberty to seek election to the Legislature or local bodies on Congress ticket.

## PROPOSAL FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR PROVINCIAL CIVIL SERVICE UNDER CONSIDERATION

A proposal is under consideration to make recruitment to the Provincial Civil Service (Executive Branch) and the Subordinate Civil Service by competitive examination. The Public Service Commission has been consulted and a decision will be made when their views have been received and considered. An announcement will be made as soon as a decision has been reached.

## AMENDMENT OF MINOR IRRIGATION, LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT, MUNICIPAL AND VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION ACTS

The question of amending the Minor Irrigation Act, the Local Self-Government Act, the Municipal Act and the Village Administration Act is being examined by Government and it is hoped that amending Bills will soon be brought before the Legislature. Government are contemplating to establish new Union Boards and Panchayats on a large scale in suitable areas.

## WATER SUPPLY IN RURAL AREAS

Government have provided Rs.60,000 in the budget for the current financial year for excavation of wells in rural areas and have distributed this amount among the Divisional Commissioners. Of this sum, Rs.30,000 is earmarked for the Harijans and aboriginals. A Committee consisting of a Harijan or aboriginal M.L.A., a non-Harijan Hindu M.L.A., a Muslim M.L.A., a representative of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, and the District Officer or his nominee will be appointed for each district for selection of sites for these wells.

## REVISION OF EDUCATION CODE

Government propose to revise the rules and orders contained in the Bihar and Orissa Education Code, some of which are not in accord with the present needs. In reply to a question asked in the August session of the Assembly it was

announced that they were considering the question of the revision of the Education Code. They have now appointed a Committee to advise them in the matter.

#### NEW SYSTEM OF CANAL RATES COLLECTION

In order to afford greater facility to the cultivators in the matter of payment of canal rates and to root out many evils of the old system, a new system known as "modified central system of collection" has been introduced throughout the Sone and Champaran canals. Under the new system the tahsildars now go to the villages for the collection of dues directly from the rate-payers. Each tahsil has been divided into three centres and the tahsildar visits each centre in his charge once a week and halts there.

#### TRAINING OF STAFF FOR RURAL WELFARE AND COOPERATIVE WORK

In order that [an] adequate number of trained men may be available in the Province for rural welfare, cooperative work and organisation of cane-growers' cooperative societies, a beginning is being made by appointing 40 stipendiaries on a pay of Rs.30 per month each to undergo training at the Cooperative Training Institute at Pusa. To strengthen the teaching side, arrangements are also being made to invite prominent cooperators and appoint part-time lecturers from outside to give lectures on special subjects to the students at the Cooperative Training Institute.

#### SCHEME TO COMBAT MALARIA

Government propose to sanction Rs.20,000 as their own share for starting eight more anti-malarial units to combat malaria in several districts of Bihar proper and Chhotanagpur. The District Boards concerned will also be called upon to contribute an equal quota towards the cost of these units.

Government also contemplate starting two Ayurvedic and one Tibbi anti-malarial units as an experimental measure.

#### 17. *Press Note on Bihar Ministry's ameliorative measures for Chhotanagpur*

The following Press Note has been issued by the Information Officer, Government of Bihar:

Since the assumption of office the present Ministry have been anxious to advance the progress of the people of Chhotanagpur in general and the aborigines in particular in all spheres—economic, educational, industrial and social. Being of the opinion that all parts of the Province, particularly those



which have not received adequate attention and where the pace of progress has been uneven in the past, should come into line and share equally in the general progress and advancement, the Ministry have adopted special measures to secure this result. In the short space of one year they have taken the following special measures for the benefit and welfare of the people of Chhotanagpur:

#### RELIEF TO TENANTRY

One of the first acts of the Ministry has been to amend the provisions of the Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908, which had operated harshly against the poverty-ridden tenantry, and to give them immediate economic relief. The new Amendment Act, which is modelled almost on the same lines as the Bihar Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1937, with additional provisions to suit the special needs of Chhotanagpur raiyats, is already in force. Among the many advantages accruing to the raiyats from this legislation are: The unpopular system of *danabandi* (appraisement of crop) has been abolished for good; the landlord's share in *batai* has been fixed at the maximum of 18 seers per maund; any application by a raiyat for commutation of his rent cannot now be rejected by the court on any ground; landlords have now to recognise partition amongst the co-sharers of a raiyati holding; the rate of interest on arrears of rent has been reduced from 12½ per cent to 6¼ per cent per annum; illegal exactions by the landlord or his agent has been made a penal offence and on conviction the accused can be sent to jail up to six months; all enhancements of rents made since 1911 are to be knocked off and similarly all commuted rents since 1911 are to be reduced proportionately to the fall in prices at present; rents can be reduced on account of the deterioration of the soil, deposit of sand, etc., and also if the landlord has neglected to maintain irrigation arrangements; no raiyat can now be sent to jail for arrears of rent, his residential house is exempt from sale, nor can his movable property be attached without his consent in writing; it has now been provided that if only the sale of a part of a holding can satisfy the decretal amount, only such part should be sold on its estimated price and no more; the raiyats to the residents within the same thana area and by the aboriginal and scheduled caste raiyats to the people of their own class respectively has been allowed; in case of the assessment of *korkar* a definite rate of rent has been prescribed with power to the Deputy Commissioner to interfere in cases in which the rate has in any way been deviated from by the landlord and special protection has been extended to BhumiHari tenures which cannot now be sold in execution of any decree—rent or otherwise.

Facilities have been provided to the tenants to file applications for reduction of rent to which they are entitled under the new Amendment Act and towards this end the court-fee payable on such applications has been reduced from annas 12 to 4 for a period of two years temporarily. Special arrangements are also being made for the speedy disposal of these applications.

## RELIEF TO KHASMAHAL TENANTS

The Ministry have reduced the rent of Khasmahal raiyats in Daltonganj by 50 per cent with effect from the 1st April 1938. The new rates will apply equally to old as well as to new tenants who have executed leases at higher rates. They have also authorised the Deputy Commissioner of Palamau to remit half the arrears of rent and all interest due on the arrears subject to the condition that the tenant must pay up all his arrears and execute a fresh lease and in really deserving cases have allowed the realisation of the accumulated arrears in suitable instalments.

The Ministry have decided to liberally interpret the provisions of the Chhotanagpur Encumbered Estates Act and normally to take over any estate under management of the Court of Wards provided the financial position of the estate in question is not entirely hopeless.

## RELIEF TO DEBTORS

By the Money-Lenders Act, which was needed more in Chhotanagpur where the incidence of indebtedness is higher and the problem more complicated than is elsewhere, the rate of interest has been reduced to 9 per cent and 12 per cent on secured and unsecured loans respectively.

## INDUSTRIAL TRAINING SCHEME FOR KAMIAS

To improve the lot and status of the Kamias of Palamau an industrial scheme for their training has been taken up.

## GRAIN GOLAS TO SUPPLY SEED GRAINS

In order to relieve the economic embarrassments of the aborigines in Chhotanagpur, the Ministry have decided to establish one grain gola in each of the 13 subdivisions (including Sadr) of the Chhotanagpur division and a special grant of Rs.2,000 for each gola will be placed at the disposal of the Sub-Divisional Officer concerned. The total estimated non-recurring expenditure on these golas will be Rs.26,000. The object of these golas will be to create an agency to provide the aborigines with seed grains to do cultivation and to provide paddy for subsistence in times of scarcity on favourable terms.

## EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

In order to extend the existing facilities for the education of aborigines, the Ministry have sanctioned a scheme at the ultimate cost of Rs.20,000 for opening 333 new primary schools for aboriginal boys in the various districts, where there is an aboriginal population.

A sum of Rs.10,000 is being expended annually on scholarships to aboriginal

students for technical and industrial training. Besides, a further annual provision of Rs.3,420 has been made for the award of educational scholarships to aboriginal boys.

It is proposed to reserve a certain number of seats at the Darbhanga Medical School for students of Chhotanagpur and the Santal Parganas and to create special scholarships for aboriginal students.

#### REPRESENTATION IN SERVICES

In appointments made by Government direct, attempt is always made to give preference to duly qualified aborigines and for ministerial appointments, instructions have been issued to District Officers to give the aborigines preferential treatment.

#### IMPROVEMENT OF WATER SUPPLY IN RURAL AREAS

The Ministry have earmarked Rs.50,000 for improvement and provision of sources of drinking water supply in rural areas for the special benefit of aborigines and Harijans.

#### TOWARDS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

In order that the mineral resources of Chhotanagpur may be exploited in the best interest of the people of the Province, the Ministry have decided to carry out a detailed survey of the mineral resources. This survey is expected to open out possibilities for the development of many important large and small scale metallurgical, mineral and chemical industries and also to afford employment to many educated young men of the Province. The investigation is expected to last 3 years at an annual cost of Rs.11,000.

#### STABILISING LAC INDUSTRY

Considering the importance which the lac industry holds in the economy of Chhotanagpur, a joint conference of the Provinces interested in the development of this industry was recently convened at Ranchi at the instance of the Ministry to consider ways and means of stabilising and rationalising the industry, as best as possible, in the interest of the mass of growers and also of the large body of manufacturers. It is hoped that as a result of this conference a workable plan will be evolved to rehabilitate this important industry.

#### FINDING EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN WORKERS

The Ministry have established two handicraft institutes at Jharia and Sijua for the training of such women workers in hand-weaving and basket-making as have

been excluded from underground work in the Jharia coal mines as a result of recent legislation.

#### AID TO HANDLOOM INDUSTRY

The Ministry have made a grant of Rs.10,000 to the Ranchi Weavers' Cooperative Stores for rehabilitating its affairs and assisting in the development of the handloom industry.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL RELIEF MEASURES

The Ministry have sanctioned an aggregate grant of Rs.6,000, at the rate of Rs.2,000 to each of the District Boards of Ranchi, Manbhum and Singbhum for anti-malarial and anti-mosquito measures.

The Ministry have sanctioned a further grant of Rs.10,000 for the installation of an X-ray plant at the Hazaribagh Sadr Hospital.

The Ministry have provided Rs.20,559 for strengthening the equipment of the Itki Sanatorium in Ranchi consequent on the extension of accommodation by 31 additional wards.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTS

As most of the forest wealth of the Province is concentrated in Chhotanagpur, the Ministry have taken special interest in the matter of the development of the forest resources. The policy of the Ministry in this respect is to make forests a national asset and to extend such benefits to the raiyats as are possible. With a view to increase fodder supply, to arrest erosion and soil wash-off, to improve agriculture and forest areas by an adequate and more sustained supply of water and to check floods in the plains, the Ministry have sanctioned, as an experimental measure, contour trenching schemes at Ranchi and the Santal Parganas at a total cost of Rs.4,900. Adequate measures have been taken to encourage the owners of private forests to place their forests for reservation and management under Government. Due care has been taken to protect the interests of raiyats in the forests before they were declared to be reserved. The rates of royalties on most of the forest produce sold at the forest in the Damin-i-koh Government Estate in the district of the Santal Parganas have been reduced and some of the forest produce has altogether been exempted from any kind of royalty.

#### IMPROVEMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

Funds have been allotted by the Ministry for the improvement of communications in Chhotanagpur. A further non-recurring grant of Rs.15,000, besides the annual recurring grant of [Rs.]15,000 for improvement of

communications, has been made to the Singbhum District Board. A grant-in-aid of Rs.2,00,000 from the subvention received from the Central Road Fund has been provided for the current year for bridging the Daltonganj-Hariharganj Road, an important link to connect with cement works at Japla, as also a grant-in-aid of Rs.80,000 for bridging and metalling the Aurangabad-Hariharganj (Maharajganj) Feeder Road to afford marketing facilities to an important agricultural area in the Palamau district. The ultimate expenditure on the former project will be Rs.5,41,800 and on the latter Rs.1,64,850. Rs.75,000 from the reserve at the disposal of the Central Government in the Central Road Fund has been allotted for improvements of the Bejupara-Khelari Road and construction of the Chamia-Lapara Road providing suitable road communication to the Anglo-Indian colony at McCluskiegunj; while Rs.5,000 has been given for improving the Gumla-Sibil Road so as to open the interior areas for affording better marketing facilities.

#### NON-OFFICIAL CHAIRMEN FOR DISTRICT BOARDS

In pursuance of their policy of democratising local self-government, the Ministry have passed orders extending the privilege of having non-official chairmen in the District Boards of Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Palamau and Singbhum, which hitherto had official chairmen. The orders will take effect after the next elections.

#### ADMINISTRATION OF MICA ACT

There is a strong volume of local opinion against the administration of the present Mica Act and the question of its repeal is under the consideration of the Ministry.

#### NEW PORTFOLIO TO DEAL WITH CHHOTANAGPUR AFFAIRS

The Ministry are considering the creation of a new portfolio under the Hon'ble the Prime Minister to deal with the affairs of Chhotanagpur. The Hon'ble the Prime Minister and his colleagues are now up in Ranchi to spend a couple of months in Chhotanagpur in order to familiarise themselves fully with the condition, needs and requirements of the people of this important area. The Ministry will thus have the benefit of personal contact with the people in these parts in studying their special problems and in deciding what further measures are necessary for ameliorating their condition.

#### 18. *Indian Civil Liberties Union—Constitution and list of foundation members of National Council*

##### CONSTITUTION

1. The organisation shall be called the Indian Civil Liberties Union.

2. *Statement of aims:* The Union stands on the general principle that all thought on matters of public concern should be freely expressed without interference. Orderly social progress is promoted by freedom of speech, freedom of thought and expression, a free press, and freedom of assemblage. The aim of the Union shall be to endeavour to protect these rights, as well as other rights of citizenship, from all encroachment and infringement by executive or judicial authority, otherwise than by normal process under the ordinary law; by the issue of ordinances and the enactment of so-called emergency laws, as well as the detention, internment, externment and imprisonment of persons without due trial; and by the tendency of governmental and other agencies to use their powers to curtail the few remaining liberties of the people.

To further these aims the Union shall collect facts; make inquiries; publish statements, reports, bulletins, pamphlets and books; organise protests; render legal advice, and take such other appropriate and legitimate steps as it may deem necessary.

3. The Union shall be non-party and undenominational.

4. The Union shall consist of a National Council, and of local committees affiliated to this Council, and of members who join the Union directly. All members of the National Council, or of the affiliated local committees, or the direct members of the Union, shall subscribe to the statement of aims as given above.

5. The National Council shall consist of the foundation members, whose names are given below, and shall have power to add to its members by co-option; it shall also have representatives from local committees affiliated to it. It will lay down the general policy of the Union and indicate the principal activities from time to time for the guidance of the local committees. It shall frame its own constitution and rules of affiliation and the manner in which affiliated committees can elect their representatives for the National Council.

6. The National Council shall have office-bearers, including a chairman, treasurer and secretary, and an Executive Committee (the number to be fixed by the Council) elected annually by the Council. This Executive Committee shall ordinarily carry on the work of the Council, and shall have the power to affiliate local committees.

7. The National Council shall meet at least once every year, but it may carry on its work by correspondence and circularisation.

8. The members of the National Council shall pay a minimum subscription of rupees three per annum.

9. The Council may organise local vigilance groups for the furtherance of its objects.

10. In case an affiliated local committee departs from the principles and aims of the Union or fails to maintain activities, the affiliation may be withdrawn by the Executive Committee of the National Council: Provided that before such decision is taken full opportunity is given to the local committee concerned to present its point of view.

11. Any person resident in India, who agrees with the aims and policy of the Union may become a member of the Union on payment of a minimum annual subscription of rupees two. In case such a person resides in an area where an affiliated local committee is functioning, he will be by virtue of his membership of the Union, a member of that local committee, and half his subscription, that is rupee one, will be remitted to that local committee. Members of the National Council will be ex-officio members of the local committees in their areas of residence, and rupee one out of their subscription of rupees three shall go to that local committee.

12. The National Council may convene at its own discretion, or at the request of a sufficient number of local committees, a National Convention of the Union, which shall be the highest authority of the organisation. The Council shall frame rules for the summoning of such a convention and for the method of representation for it.

13. The National Council or its Executive Committee shall maintain contacts with other organisations in India and abroad interested in the maintenance of civil liberties, and shall cooperate with them, where possible, in the work: Provided that the Council and its Executive will adhere to its non-party and undenominational policy and shall not participate, as an organisation, in any political or other activity except in so far as it relates to the furtherance of its aims.

#### *Provincial rules suggested for local committees*

1. Local committees of the Civil Liberties Union can be formed in any area, preferably cities or towns, where the members can meet together conveniently at frequent intervals. A minimum of seven members can form such a committee.

2. The committee, as well as every member of it, must accept as their basic policy the Statement of Aims of the Union and their activities must be governed by it. The Committee must follow the general policy as laid down by the National Council from time to time.

3. All adult persons should be eligible for membership of the committee, who are ordinarily residents of that area, pay a minimum annual subscription of rupee one, and subscribe to the aims of the Union.

4. The committee may elect its own office-bearers and executive and frame its own by-laws, in conformity with the Constitution and Rules of the Union.

5. The committee will pay an affiliation fee to the National Council and shall have the right, subject to the rules framed therefor by the National Council, to representation on the National Council. The affiliation fee shall be fixed by the Executive Committee of the National Council.

6. The principal activities of the local committee will be to:

- (i) collect facts relating to the suppression of civil liberties from all available sources as well as from enquiries conducted by it;

- (ii) publish statements, reports, periodical bulletins, pamphlets or books to acquaint the public with the facts relating to such suppression;
- (iii) organise public protests against such suppression;
- (iv) organise vigilance groups to keep watch on occasions when a breach of civil liberty is feared;
- (v) render such legal or other assistance to those who are made to suffer from such suppression of civil liberties; but it should be borne in mind that the Union or its local committees are not defence organisations as such and cannot therefore hold themselves responsible for all cases where civil liberties issues arise;
- (vi) maintain regular contact with the central office of the Union and supply it with full particulars regarding its activities.

#### FOUNDATION MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

1. President: Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, "Uttarayan", Santiniketan.
2. Chairman: Srimati Sarojini Naidu, "Golden Threshold", Hyderabad (Deccan).
3. Syt. M.S. Aney, Yeotmal (Berar).
4. Dr. K.M. Ashraf, 5 Motilal Nehru Road, Allahabad.
5. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, 19 A, Ballygunj Circular Road, Calcutta.
6. Syt. D.N. Bahadurji, High Court, Bombay.
7. Syt. Sibnath Banerji, President, All India Trade Union Congress, 209 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.
8. Mrs. Freda M. Bedi, *Contemporary India*, 98 E, Model Town, Lahore.
9. Syt. K. Bhashyam, "Champak Vilas", Luz. Mylapore, Madras.
10. Syt. Brijlal Biyani, Akola (Berar).
11. Syt. Mrinal Kanti Bose, 46 South End Park, Ballygunj, Calcutta.
12. Syt. Sarat Chandra Bose, 1 Woodburn Park, Calcutta.
13. Syt. S.A. Brelvi, Editor, *Bombay Chronicle*, Fort, Bombay.
14. Srimati Perin Captain, Orient Club Building, Chowpatty, Bombay.
15. Sardar Sardul Singh Caveshwar, Chamberlain Raod, Lahore.
16. Syt. M.C. Chagla, Avasia House, Napean Sea Raod, Bombay.
17. Diwan Chamanlal, Lahore.
18. Syt. Ramananda Chatterjee, 120-2 Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.
19. Syt. Abdul Matin Chaudhury, Bhadreswar, Dist. Sylhet.
20. Babu Bhagwan Das, "Vishrama", Chunar, U.P.
21. Seth Govind Das, Jubbulpore.
22. Syt. Nilakantha Das, Naba Bharat Press, Cuttack.
23. Syt. Akhil Chandra Datta, Advocate, Datta-Kutir, Comilla.
24. Dr. S.K. Datta, Principal, Foreman Christian College, Lahore.
25. Syt. S.D. Deo, C/o Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, Poona.
26. Syt. Bhulabhai J. Desai, 56 Esplanade Road, Fort, Bombay.



27. Dr. G.V. Deshmukh, 39 Pedder Road, Bombay 6.
28. Syt. Gangadharrao Deshpande, Belgaum.
29. Acharya Rama Deva, C/o Gurukul Kangri, Hardwar.
30. Syt. Narendra Deva, Fyzabad.
31. Shrimati Kamala Devi, Mangalore.
32. Syt. Jairamdas Doulatram, Market Road, Hyderabad, Sind.
33. Syt. Cedric Dover, 16 Mulberry Walk, London, S.W. 3.
34. Syt. N.V. Gadgil, 419 Shanwar Peth, Poona.
35. Syt. V.V. Giri, Lakshmi Nilayam, Luz. Mylapore, Madras.
36. Syt. Chandra Bhan Gupta, Advocate, Lucknow.
37. Syt. Deshbandhu Gupta, Editor, *Tej*, Delhi.
38. Syt. J.C. Gupta, 309 Circus Avenue, Calcutta.
39. Mrs. Nellie Sen Gupta, C/o Corporation of Calcutta, Calcutta.
40. Syt. Raizada Hansraj, M.L.A., Jullundur, Punjab.
41. Sir Syed Wazir Hasan, 38 Canning Road, Allahabad.
42. Dr. N.S. Hardikar, Hubli.
43. Syt. B.G. Horniman, Editor, *Bombay Sentinel*, Fort, Bombay.
44. Syt. S.K. Hosmani, Dharwar.
45. Syt. Zakir Husain, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi.
46. Syt. A.K. Fazlul Huq, Prime Minister, Bengal Government, Calcutta.
47. Syt. Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, Baghbanpura, Lahore.
48. Professor Indra, *The Daily Arjun*, Delhi.
49. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Lahore.
50. Syt. Srinivasa S. Iyengar, Anjad Bagh, Luz. Mylapore, Madras.
51. Syt. N.M. Joshi, Servants of India Society, Bombay.
52. Srimati Maniben Kara, Mulji Jetha's Bungalow, Mahaluxmi, Bombay.
53. Dr. Kailas Nath Katju, 19 Edmonstone Road, Allahabad.
54. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Charsadda, Peshawar.
55. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, *The Daily Zamindar*, Lahore.
56. Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, Mustafa Castle, Meerut.
57. Dr. N.B. Khare, Dhantoli, Nagpur.
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60. Syt. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, 4 A Rutledge Road, Lucknow.
61. Syt. J.B. Kripalani, Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad.
62. Syt. Mahashay Mrishna, C/o *Pratap*, Lahore.
63. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Manorville, Summer Hill, Simla W.
64. Srimati Rukmini Lakshmipathi, 43 Harris Road, Mount Road, Madras.
65. Syt. Sham Lal, 7 Begum Road, Lahore.
66. Syt. N.R. Malkani, Harijan Industrial Home, Kingsway, Delhi.
67. Dr. Syed Mahmud, Chapra.
68. Syt. H.P. Masani, Versova, Bombay.
69. Syt. Yusuf Meherally, C/o Bombay Congress Socialist Party, Dadabhai Manzil, Vithalbhai Patel Road, Bombay.

70. Mrs. Hansa Mehta, Khambhatta Hall, Altmont Road, Bombay.
71. Syt. Jamnadas M. Mehta, Ridge Road, Bombay.
72. Syt. Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta, Machimiani Road, Karachi (City).
73. Syt. Satyendra Nath Mojumdar, C/o *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, Barabazar, Calcutta.
74. Shrimati Lilavati Munshi, 26 Ridge Road, Bombay.
75. Syt. Hem Chandra Nag, Forward Newspapers Co., 32 Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.
76. Miss Padmaja Naidu, "Golden Threshold", Hyderabad (Deccan).
77. Syt. J.A.D. Naoroji, 78 Napean Sea Road, Bombay.
78. Syt. Brij Narain, Nicholson Road, Lahore.
79. Syt. Jayaprakash Narayan, C/o *Searchlight*, Patna.
80. Syt. K.F. Nariman, Congress House, Vithalbhai Patel Road, Bombay.
81. Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz, Portland House, Dalhousie, 53 Lawrence Road, Lahore.
82. Syt. Jawaharlal Nehru, Anand Bhawan, Allahabad.
83. Mrs. Uma Nehru, 28 A Kutcherri Road, Allahabad.
84. Syt. R.S. Pandit, Anand Bhawan, Allahabad.
85. Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Anand Bhawan, Allahabad.
86. Syt. Govind Ballabh Pant, 1 Major Banks Road, Lucknow.
87. Syt. Ramadas V. Pantulu, Farhat Bagh, Mylapore, Madras.
88. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Congress House, Bhadra, Ahmedabad.
89. Syt. Achyut Patwardhan, Court Road, Ahmednagar.
90. Syt. Sri Prakasa, Sevashrama, Benares City.
91. Syt. Murli Manohar Prasad, Editor, *Searchlight*, Patna.
92. Syt. Rajendra Prasad, Sadaquat Ashram, Dighaghat, Patna Dist.
93. Syt. C. Rajagopalachari, Tyagarajanagar, Madras.
94. Sri P.C. Ray, University College of Science, 92 Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.
95. Dr. B.C. Roy, 36 Wellington Street, Calcutta.
96. Syt. Kalinath Ray, Editor, *Tribune*, Lahore.
97. Syt. J.N. Sahani, The National Journals Ltd., Delhi.
98. Dr. Khan Sahib, M.L.A., Peshawar.
99. Syt. Mohan Lal Saksena, Aminuddaula Park, Lucknow.
100. Syt. Sampurnanand, Jalpadevi, Benares.
101. Syt. K. Santanam, Lakshmi Insurance Co. Ltd., Lahore.
102. Syt. K. Santhanam, *The Indian Express*, 40 & 42-A Mukernallammuthu Street, Madras.
103. Syt. S. Satyamurti, 2/18 Car Street, Triplicane, Madras.
104. Syt. Balkrishna Sharma, Pratap Office, Cawnpore.
105. Syt. Ravishankar Shukla, Raipur (C.P.).
106. Syt. Abdul Majeed Sindhi, M.L.C., Karachi.
107. Syt. Jogendra Singh, Bhungha, Bahraich Dist.
108. Syt. Sri Krishna Singh, Lalloo Pokhar, Monghyr (Bihar).

109. Sardar Mangal Singh, Rattan Bagh, Lahore.
110. Syt. Ram Singh, Bannu (N.W.F.P.).
111. Master Tara Singh, Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar.
112. Sardar Sant Singh, M.L.A., Legislative Assembly, Simla.
113. Dr. P. Subbarayan, Fairlawns, Egmore, Madras.
114. Syt. Purushottamdas Tandon, 20 Mirganj, Allahabad.
115. Syt. S.G. Vaze, Servants of India Society, Poona 4.
116. Madame Sofia Wadia, Secretary, Indian P.E.N., 22 Narayan Dabholkar Road, Malabar Hill, Bombay.
117. Chaudhri Khaliq-uz-Zaman, Dalibagh, Lucknow.
118. Mrs. Lado Rani Zutshi, 23 Hamilton Road, Allahabad.

19. *Press Note issued by the Government of Bihar on the Report of the Committee to inquire into the system of administration in Santal Parganas*

The following Press Note has been issued by the Information Officer, Government of Bihar:

The report of the Committee appointed by Government to inquire into the system of administration of the Santal Parganas and to suggest such changes and improvements in it as will best conduce to the well-being of the inhabitants, has been published. The report is divided into 21 chapters and deals with the following subjects:

1. Constitution of the Committee, Terms of Reference and Procedure and Scope of Inquiry.
2. Introductory—Description of the present system of administration.
3. The staffing of the district.
4. Criminal justice.
5. Civil justice.
6. Method of carrying out the proposed Reorganisation of the Courts.
7. The position of pleaders.
8. The Santal Civil Rules.
9. Codification of law.
10. Settlement.
11. Economic conditions and rents.
12. Restrictions on the right of transfer.
13. The Pradhani system and the collection of rents.
14. Position of Pradhan's co-sharers.
15. The satisfaction of rent decrees.
16. The Ghatwali estates.
17. Police administration.
18. The Parganait system.

19. Local self-government.
20. Miscellaneous.
21. Summary of recommendations.

2. The recommendations made by the Committee are briefly as follows:

(a) *System of Administration*

(1) The essential features of the existing system must be maintained, but the aim of Government should be to approximate the administration progressively to that of Chhotanagpur; in any case the system must be modified progressively as the district advances further (paragraph 18).

(b) *The District Staff*

(2) More direct contact between the magistracy and the people should be re-established, firstly, by relieving the Deputy Commissioner and the Sub-Divisional Officers of a portion of their court work and, secondly, by keeping officers in the district for longer periods (paragraphs 21 and 22).

(c) *Criminal Justice*

(3) The criminal courts should be transferred entirely to the ordinary jurisdiction of the High Court except in the matter of appeals from orders, other than orders under section 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code, passed under section 118 of that Code which should be heard by the Deputy Commissioner empowered under section 406 of the same Code (paragraphs 29 and 30).

(d) *Civil Justice*

(4) The Deputy Commissioner should cease to exercise the powers of a District Judge except in appeals in rent suits (paragraph 33).

(5) All suits of every description up to Rs.500 should be tried by the Santal Civil Courts, all money and title suits over Rs.500 by regular Subordinate Judges, and all rent suits above Rs.500 by Sub-Divisional Officers empowered as Subordinate Judges (para 41).

(e) *Re-organisation of the Courts*

(6) The Special Magistrate under section 30 of the Criminal Procedure Code should be abolished and a District and Sessions Judgeship should be created for the Santal Parganas with headquarters at Dumka (para 45).

(7) Two Subordinate Judgeships should also be created for the district: one for the Deoghar and Jamtara subdivisions with headquarters at Deoghar and the

other for the remaining four subdivisions with headquarters at Dumka (paragraph 48).

*(f) Position of Pleaders*

(8) Restrictions on the admission of pleaders to practise in the district should be maintained but qualified pleaders who are natives or domiciled inhabitants of the district should be admitted without restrictions (paragraph 55).

(9) Portions of the Legal Practitioners' Act should be extended to the district to regulate the admission and discipline of legal practitioners in the proposed regular civil courts and in criminal courts and to deal satisfactorily with touting and unprofessional conduct on the part of legal practitioners in the Santal Civil Courts (Paragraph 57).

(10) In suits between Dikkus and non-Dikkus the court may, if the non-Dikku party wishes to employ a pleader or mukhtar, permit the other parties to employ a pleader or mukhtar (para 59).

(11) Pleaders' or mukhtars' fees may be included in the costs of a suit where pleaders or mukhtars are entitled to appear as of right. In no case should such fees be less than Rs.2 or more than 2½ per cent of the value of the suit (paragraph 60).

(11 A) The practice of annual renewal of pleaders' certificates for Santal Civil Courts should be dropped (paragraph 60-A).

*(g) Santal Civil Rules*

(12) The Santal Civil Rules require amendment and expansion but should continue to be as far as possible a self-contained Code (paragraphs 62 and 63).

*(h) Codification of Law*

(13) A self-contained Tenancy Act for the district should be enacted to consolidate, amend and supplement the existing law of landlord and tenant without prejudice to the elasticity of the existing system and to the discretionary powers at present vested in the Deputy Commissioner and the Sub-Divisional Officers. The Santal Parganas Manual should also be revised and brought up to date and a second volume of the Manual should be compiled containing the rulings of the courts of the Commissioner and of the Deputy Commissioner (paragraphs 70 and 76).

*(i) Settlement*

(14) A tribunal should be constituted for the correction of material errors in the settlement record including entries of Brahmottar and Shivottar lands of previous settlements as raiyati in the record of the current settlement (paragraphs 78 and 83).

(15) The duration of settlement operations in future should not be longer than eight years and the intervals between settlements not less than thirty years (paragraph 80).

#### (j) *Economic Condition and Rents*

##### (i) Credit

(16) If the movement of cooperative credit is to succeed the rates of interest should be reduced, much more care should be taken in the granting of loans, and the constructive side of cooperation should be developed (para 93).

(17) There is more immediate hope in the development of grain golas and grain banks (paragraph 94).

(18) The rate of interest allowed in the present Usury Law should be reduced and ambiguities should be removed (paragraph 95).

##### (ii) Rents

(19) The question of rent levels in the Godda and Mahagama thanas and in the Khas villages of Parganas Sultanabad and Ambar and in a small area in Deoghar thana should be further examined with a view to giving relief, where necessary, for which provision should be made on the lines of section 112-A of the Bihar Tenancy Act of section 85 of the Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act (paragraphs 103, 104 and 113).

(20) A temporary regulation should be enacted enabling raiyats to apply for exclusion from the settlement records of second class *bari* land recorded in the current *khatian* which is not recorded in the *jamabandi* land of the village in the previous settlement (paragraph 111).

#### *Economic development of the district*

(21) Special grants should be made by Government for the expansion of education among the aboriginals (paragraph 116).

(22) Improvement of agriculture and irrigation should be undertaken and the penalties to secure the maintenance of irrigation works should be increased, if necessary (paragraph 118).

(23) Further efforts should be made for the development of village industries (paragraph 120).

(24) A Development Board should be created for the Santal Parganas and other aboriginal districts as a whole (paragraph 121).

#### (k) *Restrictions on the Right of Transfer*

(25) Government should on the lines of section 49(B)(2) of the Bihar Tenancy

Act retain power to give protection to castes or tribes other than those designated by the term non-Dikku, if it is considered necessary (paragraph 125).

(26) No right of sale should be given to any class of raiyats (paragraph 127).

(27) A memorandum should be compiled setting forth the actual state of Santal law on the question of women's right of inheritance (paragraph 129).

(28) A right of transfer by will or gift is also unnecessary (paragraph 130).

(29) No right of mortgage should be allowed to non-Dikkus (paragraph 131).

(30) Dikku rayats may be allowed a right to give a complete usufructuary mortgage for a period not exceeding seven years to *jamabandi* raiyats of the district (paragraph 133).

(31) Holdings may be entrusted to others for cultivation in certain cases to prevent hardship (paragraph 135).

### (l) *Pradhani System and the Collection of Rents*

(32) The Pradhan's official *jote* should be built up to an adequate size and new *jotes* should be created where they do not exist (paragraph 140).

(33) Till then abatement of rents of the Pradhan's private *jote* should be allowed, proportionate to the amount by which the rental of the official *jote* falls below 1/12th of the total rent of the village (paragraph 141).

(34) The Pradhan should receive commission at the full rate of 6¼ per cent on any rents paid within time and at half rate for rents paid within six months of the *kist* date (paragraph 142).

(35) The rate of interest on arrears of rent should be reduced from 12½ to 6¼ per cent (paragraph 145).

(36) The Paus *kist* should be postponed from the 15th Paus to the 1st Magh (paragraph 146).

(37) The Santal Civil Rules should be amended to provide for simultaneous joint rent suits against raiyats who default in the payment of rent to the Pradhan, whenever the landlord sues the Pradhan for the rent of the village, and court-fees should be assessed on the joint suit as a whole and not separately against each defaulting tenant (paragraph 148).

(38) The limitation of one year for rent suits against the Pradhan should be given a further trial (para 150).

(39) For the recovery of the arrears of rent from the Pradhan *khas* possession should be tried before eviction (para 151).

### (m) *Position of Pradhan's Co-sharers*

(40) At every appointment of a new Pradhan the consent of the co-sharers should be taken before their shares are made security, and they should have the right to have their share released from security for the Pradhan's rent any time after the first five years after paying all arrears then outstanding (para 154).

(41) Pradhan should be encouraged to give cash security (para 155).

(42) Decrees in contribution suits by some co-sharers against the Pradhan and/or other co-sharers should be made executable against the holding or shares of the defaulters (paragraph 156).

(43) Similar provision should also be made for the benefit of ordinary raiyats (paragraph 157).

#### (n) *Satisfaction of Rent Decrees*

(44) The *Paus kist* should be extended from the 15th to the 20th of the month and interest on arrears of rent should be reduced from 12½ to 6¼ per cent (paragraph 158).

(45) Rent should be expressly declared to be the first charge on the holding (paragraph 159).

(46) Execution of rent decrees by attachment of movables and crops should cease (paragraph 160).

(47) The usual methods of execution against the holding by (i) eviction, (ii) *khas* possession, and (iii) payment by instalments should be retained and part eviction should be recognized as a legal method (paragraphs 161 and 162).

(48) In *khas* villages where the raiyats pay directly to the landlord provision should be made for the payment of rent by postal money order (paragraph 166).

#### (o) *Ghatwali Estates*

(49) Ghatwals should be allowed to give a lease of their estates or parts thereof with the permission of the Commissioner for a period not exceeding ten years (or at most fifteen years) for legal necessity, the lease to remain valid even if the ghatwal dies; and special legislation on the lines of the Chhotanagpur Encumbered Estates Act should be undertaken for the protection of encumbered ghatwals (paragraph 169).

(50) The Deputy Commissioner should be empowered by law to attach the rents of any village or villages of a ghatwali estate for the purpose of recovering unpaid chaukidari dues and to appoint an officer to receive the rents (paragraph 171).

#### (p) *Police Administration*

(51) Regular police should be introduced into the Dumka and Jamtara subdivisions completely (paragraph 173).

(52) The Intelligence Department system should be introduced in the Damin-i-Koh (paragraph 175).

(53) The number of sirdars in the Godda subdivision should be reduced (paragraph 176).



(q) *Parganait System*

(54) Parganait should be appointed by a joint process of election and selection, and hold office for seven years (paragraph 179).

(55) They should receive full commission on sums paid by the 31st March and for the present at any rate half commission on sums paid by the 31st September (para 183).

(r) *Local Self-Government*

(56) The District Committee should be replaced by a District Board with an official Chairman and non-official Vice-Chairman (para 185).

(57) Adequate representation of the Sanials should be secured on the Board (paragraph 187).

(58) Seats on the Board should be filled by direct election except in the case of officials (paragraphs 186 and 188).

(59) In future the expenditure of the improvement grant for the Damin-i-Koh Government estate should be made under the Deputy Commissioner, but the sums required for expenditure on main roads, inspection bungalows and contribution to dispensaries in the estate should be allotted to the District Board annually for expenditure (paragraph 193).

(60) Union Committees should be established without delay at Jamtara, Pakur and Godda (paragraph 195).

(61) Bhagalpur-Dumka-Suri and the Jasidih-Dumka-Rampurhat roads should be provincialised (paragraph 196).

(s) *Miscellaneous*

(62) The Hakdam system should be abolished and provision should be made for remission of rent of land which has been temporarily or permanently deteriorated by a deposit of sand or by submersion under water (paragraph 197).

3. On the following points the decisions of the Committee were not unanimous, namely:

(1) *Admission of pleaders.*—The majority of the Committee consider that all qualified persons who are natives to, or domiciled in, the district should be admitted without restriction (para 55).

(2) *Finality of records of future settlements.*—The majority of the Committee consider that in the case of (a) title disputes between proprietors *inter se*, and (b) disputes between raiyats concerning title to a holding there should be a right to contest the record in the Civil Court (paragraph 79).

(3) *Revision of rent.*—The majority of the Committee think that where the classification of the land has been raised by the efforts of the tenant himself, the rent assessed at the settlement on the improved classification should be revised and the old rent should be restored (paragraph 108).

(4) *Soil classification*.—A majority of the Committee recommend that the classification of land in the records of the last settlement where it is higher than in the previous settlement record, should be reduced to that level (paragraph 109).

(5) *Development Board*.—Some members of the Committee think that there should be a separate board for each district (paragraph 121).

(6) *Mortgage*.—One member of the Committee holds that all raiyats, Dikku and non-Dikku, should be allowed to mortgage lands within certain limits (paragraph 131).

(7) *Commission of Pradhans*.—A majority of the Committee consider that the landlords should pay one and a half annas in the rupee and the raiyat half an anna (paragraph 143).

(8) *Sale in execution of rent decree*.—A majority of the Committee are of opinion that sales of ordinary raiyati *jotes* should be allowed on certain conditions (paragraph 164).

4. Copies of the report may be had from the Superintendent, Government Printing, Gulzarbagh, on payment of Rs. 1-2-0 as price plus postage and packing charges.

## **APPENDICES**

### **PART II**

**(Report of the Committee of Inquiry into wages and  
conditions of labour in Cawnpore)**

*Copy of letter from Govind Ballabh Pant, Prime Minister, Government of  
the United Provinces, to Dr. Rajendra Prasad*

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

Lucknow

August 18, 1937

My dear Rajendra Babu,

You must have received my wire at Wardha. I had a mind to write to you yesterday but your programme was not known to me and I had no idea as to your likely movements after the Wardha meeting. It has since appeared in the Press that you were to leave immediately after the close of the Working Committee's session for your own province. So I am addressing this letter to you there.

You are presumably aware of the trouble we were having at Cawnpore: it has in fact not completely subsided yet. There were a series of strikes during the last eight or nine months and ultimately things culminated in a general strike early this month. The labourers in Cawnpore are mostly unorganised and they are not intelligent enough even to form a clear idea of the rates or terms on which they are employed. They have, however, a vague feeling that their wages have been cut and that they were not having a straight deal. The employers, on the other hand, assert that the wages in Cawnpore have not been revised during the last seven or eight years and that in spite of the slump they have maintained the old level. They also allege that the rates prevailing in Cawnpore are higher than in Bombay or Ahmedabad. I have never looked into the matter and have not the least notion as to how they compare with the level of wages in other industrial cities. As you presumably know, the textile industry is the most important one in Cawnpore, though there are also other subsidiary industries. Cawnpore has become a big industrial centre and the industrial future of our province mainly depends on peaceful and satisfactory conditions prevailing in Cawnpore. The Mazdoor Sabha which has been representing labour in all negotiations has given a list of subjects for investigation by the Committee. The employers may have their own suggestions. The Committee will have to go into the whole question of relations between labour and employers in Cawnpore including matters pertaining to wages, hours of work, etc. The inquiry is not likely to take more than a month and if there are occasional breaks even then it should not go beyond two. Certain technical matters will also come up for consideration. Besides the representatives of the parties I was thinking of nominating a person holding the position of a High Court Judge and an expert familiar with labour problems. I am now waiting for the return of Jawaharlalji and on his arrival I shall finally settle this matter in consultation with him. I know that you have to attend to many ticklish questions in your own province and I realize that I am acting somewhat selfishly in taking you away at a time when Sri Babu would so much desire to have your

guidance at close quarters. But I have not yet been able to find any solution. I am still giving thought to it and if I can at all spare you I shall not impose this additional burden on you. I know how very busy and embarrassed you are and yet how reluctant you are to say "no". If I have to adhere to my present scheme, I trust you will very kindly not refuse.

I need not say anything about our affairs here. If I took up that matter this letter would become unduly long, and I have no desire to encroach upon your time now. Trust this finds you well.

Yours sincerely,  
G.B. Pant

*Copy of letter from Dr. Rajendra Prasad to Govind Ballabh Pant*

Circuit House, Cawnpore  
11th September 1937

My dear Pantji,

I saw the representatives of the Mazdoor Sabha this morning and had a long discussion with them about the situation. They gave me a statement containing their complaints against the millowners and mentioning cases of victimization. After discussion we were able to come to an arrangement which would be acceptable to them, if it was accepted by the millowners. The real trouble at the present moment is about the dismissal of 6 men in 3 of the mills which has resulted in what is called the strike by the millowners and lockout by the workers. The point of view of the workers is that these men must be reinstated and lock-out should be called off and they would advise the workers to resume work and would even guarantee discipline in the mills if there is no victimization. They were prepared at our suggestion even to agree to suspension of these 6 men while their case is investigated and decided by the Enquiry Committee provided some subsistence allowance was paid to them during the period of suspension. If the decision of the Committee went against them suspension would be treated as dismissal and there would be an end of the matter. If, on the other hand, the Committee decided that they were wrongly dismissed, then they should be reinstated and their salary for the period of suspension paid to them.

2. I had a talk with Mr. Owen and the Superintendent of Police and they explained the situation on the question of the agency which would deal with the interim cases that would arise while the enquiry lasts. My feeling has always been that it will not be proper or impossible for the Enquiry Committee which is entrusted with the work of dealing with larger questions to get involved in these disputes which may arise from day to day and it would therefore be better to have a separate agency to deal with these cases, I had put this viewpoint to the labourers and they were agreeable to have a sort of arbitrator, provided before

any cases actually went to the arbitrator they would like to be informed so that they might use their influence with the workers and bring about an amicable settlement and only in cases they and the employers fail in their attempts should the matter go to the arbitrator. Some of the workers also suggested the name of Mr. Balkrishna Sharma in confidence about this. When I had a talk with Mr. Owen he approved of the idea of having a separate agency to deal with these interim cases and suggested that the best person would be the District Judge who would bring his judicial experience to bear on these cases and would be a person wholly disinterested in the matter. But he would not object to any person if the party agreed to it.

3. I had a talk thereafter with Mr. Padampat Singhania and subsequently with the members of the Executive Committee of the Employers' Association. Mr. Padampat Singhania suggested that it would be best if the Committee itself deals with the pending cases which could be disposed of without much difficulty and without taking much time and as regards the disputes that might arise in future the matter might be left over for the present but taken up at a late stage when perhaps there might be better atmosphere. When I met the millowners after explaining the situation I suggested to them that to allow the Enquiry Committee to have the proper atmosphere for the enquiry it was best that the trouble which has arisen should be ended and that it would be difficult to carry on the investigation while a strike or lockout was on. They agreed with this view. They on their behalf agreed to call off the lockout if they could be assured that the workers would start working in the ordinary way. But they were not prepared under any circumstances to reinstate these six men who had been dismissed. Their point of view is that they cannot agree to any arbitration as to whom they should employ and whom they should not employ. I suggested to them that it was not intended to take away this right from them but since the abnormal conditions are prevailing they should agree to abide by the decisions of the Enquiry Committee and reinstate the dismissed men, if the Committee after enquiry found that they have been wrongly dismissed. If on the other hand the finding of the Committee was that they have been rightly dismissed there would be an end of the matter, as the Mazdoor Sabha people were prepared to accept that decision of the Committee. But the representatives of the employers were not prepared to accept this position. I suggested also to them that they should treat them as on suspension and await the decision of the Committee. But they were not prepared to accept any of these suggestions. So the matter rests there. After meeting the millowners I met Mr. Owen again and related to him the conversation I had. He will try to meet the millowners and use such influence as he has with them to make them agree to treat these workers as on suspension and to accept the decision of the Committee when it is finally given. Mr. Owen thinks that the main question which has been referred to the Committee should be enquired into and decision given by the Committee. That will enable the Government to know whether the workers were in the right or the millowners were in the right and an investigation into that question which is of a great

importance should not be allowed to be jeopardised by any individual cases which might be allowed to wait, till after that enquiry is over. It was pointed out to him that the parties would take 2 or 3 weeks to get ready with their answers to the questions which will again be put to them as the cotton mills lockout during this interval would create further trouble. I see the force of this but feel that in any case the general investigation must be held and decision given by the Committee.

I am going to Patna tonight and I am returning on Wednesday. In the meantime Mr. Owen will try to reason with the millowners. I have asked Acharya Narendra Deoji to talk with the labour friends and see if any middle position could be reached. When we meet in the Committee on Wednesday, we shall decide the whole question. I shall request you in the meantime to complete the personnel formally and announce the appointment so that when we meet on Wednesday next we may be in a position formally to deal with the question. You will also of course announce the terms of reference if it has not been done already formally.

Yours sincerely,  
Rajendra Prasad

# REPORT OF THE LABOUR ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

1. *Appointment and terms of reference:* The Labour Enquiry Committee was appointed by the U.P. Government Notification No. 3275/XVIII, dated 11th November 1937, which is reproduced below:

The Governor has been pleased to appoint with effect from 30th August 1937 a Committee of Enquiry to examine and report on the conditions of life and work of the labourers employed in factories at Cawnpore.

2. The Committee consists of:

- (1) Sriyut Rajendra Prasad Saheb, Chairman,
- (2) Sir Tracy Gavin Jones,
- (3) Mr. Harihar Nath Shastri,
- (4) Sriyut Gulzari Lal Nanda, and
- (5) Professor S.K. Rudra, M.A. (Cantab).

3. The terms of reference to the Committee are as follows:

- (1) Whether wage cuts have taken place direct or indirect, and if so, where and to what extent?
- (2) In case any such wage cut is established, whether there should be any increase in wages, and if so, what?
- (3) How do the present rates of wages in Cawnpore compare with those prevailing elsewhere in India and whether, taking also into consideration the profits made by the mills and the cost of living in Cawnpore they should be increased and, if so, to what extent?
- (4) Is it desirable to prescribe any minimum rate of wages for any class of labour at Cawnpore and, if so, what should such rate be?
- (5) What is the most suitable arrangement for shifts to enable a factory to continue working as long as it desires to do so without unduly inconveniencing the labourers?
- (6) Whether schemes of rationalisation and intensification of labour have been, are being, or are intended to be introduced, and if so, on what lines? What are the effects of such schemes on the labourers as regards their earnings, health, efficiency, etc.?
- (7) What abuses, if any, are associated with the present system of supervision, recruiting, suspending and dismissing labourers and what steps should be taken to remove the same?



- (8) What days, if any, should be observed as holidays in factories in addition to or in lieu of Sundays?
- (9) On what terms should emergency leave be granted in the case of (a) piece-workers and (b) time-workers?
- (10) Are the general conditions of labour in factories satisfactory and what, if any, improvements are needed?

The Committee will also adjudicate on questions of interpretation of the terms of settlement arrived at on the 9th August 1937, as well as on other matters referred to it by either party during the pendency of the inquiry.

4. The Director of Industries, United Provinces, is the Secretary to the Committee.

5. The Committee is empowered to co-opt technical advisers who will not have the power to vote.

6. The Committee will please submit its report before the end of January 1938.

7. The Government hopes that the parties concerned will render all possible assistance to the Committee.

2. The terms of reference were supplemented by G.O. No. 3275(3)/XVIII, dated 11th November 1937, which ran as follows:

I am directed to say that it has been suggested to Government that steps may be taken to introduce welfare work and to effect improvements in the housing conditions, etc. of the labourers at Cawnpore with a view to ameliorate their condition and promote their happiness and well-being.

2. I am therefore to request that the marginally noted three points may

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What improvements are required in the conditions in which the labourers live in Cawnpore especially as regards housing, sanitation, &amp;c., and what steps should be taken to effect the same?</li> <li>2. What welfare activities are desirable and through what agencies should they be carried out?</li> <li>3. What statistical data should be maintained in regard to labour conditions and welfare and by what agency?</li> </ol> | <p>kindly be placed before the Labour Enquiry Committee, so that it may consider them and make such recommendations to the Government on the subject as it thinks necessary.</p> |
|--|--|

3. Sriyut Gulzarilal Nanda could not be spared by the Government of Bombay to serve on the Committee. By Notification No. 4543/XVIII, dated January 13, 1938 the Government therefore appointed Mr. B. Shiva Rao, Press Correspondent, New Delhi, to take his place. Sriyut Gulzarilal Nanda, however,

took a lively interest in our proceedings. He visited Cawnpore once and helped us with advice. Mr. B. Shiva Rao actually took charge of his duties on 6th January 1938.

4. The constitution of the Committee underwent a further change when Sir Tracy Gavin Jones and Mr. Harihar Nath Shastri offered to retire on certain conditions. It was felt that it would be more conducive to the work of the Committee if the representatives of the parties to the dispute, which had given rise to the Committee, did not function as its members. The Government accordingly issued Notification No. 143/XVIII 735, dated January 16th, 1938, which is reproduced below:

The Governor is pleased to direct that with effect from January 12, 1938, the Committee of Enquiry appointed in Notification No. 3275/XVIII, dated November 11, 1937, as amended by Notification No. 4543/XVIII, dated January 13, 1938, to examine and report on the conditions of life and work of the labourers employed in factories at Cawnpore shall consist of:

1. Sriyut Rajendra Prasad Saheb, Chairman,
2. Professor S.K. Rudra, and
3. Mr. B. Shiva Rao, Press Correspondent.

5. On the retirement of Sir Tracy Gavin Jones and Mr. Harihar Nath Shastri the Committee co-opted Mr. B. K. Murthy, B.E. (Mech.), M.Sc., Tech., A.M.C.T., Textile expert, to the U.P. Government as a Technical Adviser.

6. *Account of the dispute:* The events leading to the appointment of the Committee may be briefly summarised.

Immediately after the assumption of office by the Congress in July 1937, a number of strikes took place in several textile mills in Cawnpore with a view to securing an increase in wages and general improvement in the conditions of employment. It was stated at a number of meetings of workers that the employers had reduced their wages from time to time during the last few years, either directly by a revision of wage rates, or indirectly by the abolition or curtailment of bonuses and allowances. It was also alleged that the policy of employers of introducing rationalisation and other methods of intensification was responsible for increasing unemployment among factory labourers at Cawnpore. Allegations were also made that the members and office-bearers of the Mazdoor Sabha, the only organisation of textile workers in Cawnpore, were harassed and victimised by the employers with a view to crush trade union activities. The Hon'ble the Premier, Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, explained the attitude of his Government on the subject and promised to take all legitimate steps to secure to factory workers in Cawnpore reasonable standards of work and living. He also announced the decision of the Government to appoint a special Labour Officer to deal with labour disputes arising from day to day. This officer, Dr. Raj Bahadur Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., was appointed in the beginning of August 1937. On August 5, the Hon'ble Minister for Industries, Dr. Kailash Nath Katju,

visited Cawnpore and discussed the demands of the workers with the representatives of Labour and the Employers' Association of Northern India which had been brought into existence on August 3, 1937. Unfortunately, however, the negotiations fell through because the employers would not agree to recognise the Mazdoor Sabha as the mouthpiece of labour. The radical section of the Mazdoor Sabha thereupon organised a systematic campaign of agitation which resulted in a general strike in almost all the textile mills. The Employers' Association reviewed the situation on August 6, and agreed to grant recognition to the Mazdoor Sabha provided all the mills in Cawnpore resumed normal work by August 9. The workers, however, refused to go back to work until all the demands of the workers, including the restoration of cuts in wages, had been agreed to by the employers. The District Authorities considered it necessary, in the interests of peace, to promulgate orders under section 144, prohibiting meetings and the assembly of more than five persons. Action was also taken against certain individuals, including the General Secretary of the Mazdoor Sabha, Mr. S.S. Yusuf, under section 107 of the Criminal Procedure Code. On August 8, Hon'ble the Premier decided personally to intervene in the matter and came down to Cawnpore to discuss the situation. His efforts were successful in bringing about an agreement between the representatives of the Employers' Association and the Mazdoor Sabha in the afternoon of August 9. That agreement provided for the appointment of an Enquiry Committee to go into the demands of labour. A full copy of the agreement will be found in Appendix I to this report.

7. *Scope of the enquiry:* Although the terms of reference were general, the Committee confined itself to consideration of the conditions in the textile industry at Cawnpore, more particularly cotton. The jute mills were not looked into at all. This was necessitated by the circumstances under which the enquiry was held. The dispute had occurred in the textile industry which is also the most prominent industry in Cawnpore. There was no statistical material available to formulate any opinion about other industries and the time limit imposed by the Government circumscribed the sphere of our investigations. According to its terms of reference the Committee was also called upon to adjudicate on all interim disputes. At the very commencement of its career, it was faced with a deadlock that had arisen on account of strikes or lockouts in three mills. We requested the Government to refer this matter to a separate body, and the Government appointed a Court of Inquiry under section 3 of the Trade Disputes Act, 1929. With regard to other interim disputes that arose from time to time, the Committee expressed its inability to take them up on the ground that their consideration would prejudice the general enquiry and delay the findings on the main issues. The Government then directed that "questions of interpretation and other matters which are referred to it during the pendency of the enquiry can be taken up later after the main enquiry is completed and the report thereon prepared".

8. *Procedure:* At our sittings both the Employers' Association and the

Mazdoor Sabha were fully represented by their members or nominees. The Government appointed Mr. Shitla Prasad Saksena, M.A., Lecturer in Economics, Lucknow University, as a technical adviser to assist the Mazdoor Sabha in presenting their case to the Committee and he was present throughout. The procedure for examining the witnesses was that after they had been examined by the Chairman and other members of the Committee, both sides were allowed to examine or cross-examine them, as the case may be.

9. *Press:* The Press was admitted to all public sittings of the Committee, except in the early stages of the enquiry when the Secretary issued communiques briefly summarising the proceedings of the day. In view of the tension prevalent in the city, appeals were made on more than one occasion to the Press to co-operate with the work of the Committee. We are grateful for the response made to these appeals.

10. *Questionnaire:* A comprehensive questionnaire was issued which is reproduced as Appendix II to this report. We received only two written replies, one from the Employers' Association which gave general answers on behalf of the cotton textile industry as a whole and the other from the Executive Committee of the Mazdoor Sabha. At a later stage the Employers' Association supplemented its reply by supplying copies of the replies of the individual mill members. Nineteen out of twenty-nine textile mills in Cawnpore are members of the Employers' Association. The non-member mills did not care to reply to the questionnaire and took no part in the proceedings.

11. *Our handicaps:* The work of the Committee was greatly hampered in more ways than one. Apart from the complications and the delays caused by lightning strikes, frequent allegations from the workers' side of victimisation and the generally disturbed conditions in Cawnpore, which culminated in the murder of an employee of the Elgin Mills, we felt that the lack of precise information, of the kind which was available to a similar Committee in Bombay, was a very serious handicap. The Bombay Labour Office is a unique institution in India with a well-equipped staff and through its experience of over seventeen years has accumulated a wide and intimate knowledge of all aspects of the labour problem, especially in relation to the cotton textile industry. It has a wealth of well-ascertained and well-assimilated facts and figures at its disposal. Such an institution is a powerful factor in the elucidation of complex and intricate problems, such as we have been called upon to determine. It has carried out, on at least four occasions, a thorough wage census, such as has not been attempted even once in these Provinces. Unlike Bombay, Ahmedabad and Sholapur, Cawnpore has not even had the advantage of the service of an accurately constructed and regularly maintained cost of living index number, so valuable in any investigation of the wage problem. We are glad to note, however, that a useful beginning in this direction has been made by the Bureau of Statistics and Economic Research, U.P., Cawnpore. Moreover, there have been, during the last twelve years, three detailed investigations by Tariff Boards into the conditions of the textile industry; but none of these visited Cawnpore.

12. Though the enquiry started in November, our Committee did not receive detailed material from the Employers' Association until a very late stage of our investigations. It was, in fact, only after several reminders that the documents, to which reference was made in the written memorandum of the Employers' Association, were made available to the members of the Committee, on the strict understanding that these would not be disclosed to the representatives of the Mazdoor Sabha, except at the time of cross-examination. Protests were made to us by the latter that this placed the Mazdoor Sabha's representatives at a great disadvantage in cross-examining witnesses appearing on behalf of either individual mills or of the Employers' Association. Greatly as we sympathised with this point of view, we felt bound by the restriction imposed on us by the employers. This procedure prolonged the stage of oral evidence, with results which could not in any way be regarded as satisfactory.

13. *Witnesses examined:* We orally examined altogether 25 witnesses, of whom 9 were drawn from amongst the management of the various mills and 9 were workers, 3 having been produced on behalf of the employers and the rest on behalf of the Mazdoor Sabha. The other witnesses were:

1. Sir Tracy Gavin Jones, President and representative of the Employers' Association, assisted by Messrs. A.L. Carnegie and C.W. Tosh;
2. Mr. A.L. Carnegie, President of the British India Corporation;
3. Mr. Harihar Nath Shastri, President of the Mazdoor Sabha;
4. Mr. Shitla Prasad Saksena, representing the Mazdoor Sabha;
5. Mr. B.P. Srivastava, Chairman, Municipal Board, Cawnpore, assisted by Dr. S.N. Tiwary, Executive Officer;
6. Rai Bahadur Lala Sri Narain, Executive Officer, Improvement Trust; and
7. Mr. A. Hai, Chief Inspector of Factories and Boilers, U.P.

A complete list of the witnesses will be found in Appendix III.

14. *Places visited:* Members of the Committee visited from time to time various mills and the localities where the workers live. Mill Directors and Managers gave every possible assistance and freedom to see their mills and to interrogate their workers. Opportunity was also given to see the mills at work during the night shift. The Chairman of the Improvement Trust, Mr. E.M. Souter, C.I.E., M.L.A., with the Executive Officer showed us some *ahatas* and the new area reserved for factory workers. The Mazdoor Sabha officers, particularly Mr. Suraj Prasad Avasthi, M.L.A., enabled us to visit their premises and see the Reading Room and Dispensary facilities they provide for the workers. Mr. Carnegie of the British India Corporation conducted us over the MacRobertganj and Allenganj settlements. Mr. H.A. Wilkinson gave us the opportunity of acquainting ourselves with the welfare work carried on for several years through the agency of well-trained Y.M.C.A. Secretaries.

15. *Sittings:* There was a preliminary meeting at Lucknow on the 10th September 1937, attended by the Hon'ble the Premier and the Hon'ble Minister

for Industries, at which the programme of the Committee was decided. The formal sittings of the Committee commenced at Cawnpore on 15th September. After the meeting of the 16th September, there was a long adjournment to enable those interested to prepare their answers to the questionnaire. The Committee reassembled on November 15th, and except for a few short breaks and two long breaks, one of a week in November and the other of about a fortnight in December, it met almost from day to day until the 31st January 1938, when the evidence was closed. In all, we had 38 sittings.

16. We have to record with the deepest regret that our President, Sriyut Rajendra Prasad, was prevented by serious illness from attending the sittings except in September 1937, and from 7th to 14th January 1938. It is, however, a matter of profound satisfaction that he was able to take part in the final discussions relating to our recommendations. In his absence Professor S.K. Rudra presided over our deliberations. He was present throughout from the 15th November 1937. Mr. Shiva Rao was present at our sittings from the 7th to 24th January 1938.

17. *Acknowledgements:* We must express our gratitude to Sir Tracy Gavin Jones who, even after his retirement from the Committee, continued to take a keen and active interest in our deliberations. We are indebted to Pandit Harihar Nath Shastri, for presenting the case on behalf of the workers, in spite of serious handicaps, with marked ability. We would also like to place on record our high appreciation of the very valuable help that we have received from Mr. B.K. Murthy, our technical adviser, and Mr. J. Tinker, Managing Director, Cawnpore Cotton Mills, on technical matters. They have given us their time ungrudgingly and assisted us in all possible ways. The work done by Mr. Shitla Prasad Saksena, ably assisted by Mr. R.D. Bharadwaj, has been of immense value and contributed greatly to the unravelling of the problems before us. Our thanks are also due to the various gentlemen who came to give evidence before us. The lucid and unreserved manner in which they answered our questions, evoked our admiration on several occasions.

The small staff of the Industries Department placed at our disposal did their work with commendable expedition and efficiency. They worked unsparingly under great difficulties. Our special thanks are due to them and particularly to Messrs. Debi Prasad and Faiyaz Ali.

We would like to make special mention of the help we received from Dr. Raj Bahadur Gupta, the Govt. Statistician, and his able assistant, Mr. Jugal Kishore Pande, M.A., in supplying us with needful statistical statements.

We would also like to mention with appreciation the name of Mr. D.M. Arrindell, the Employers' Labour Officer, for helping to elucidate the employers' point of view.

18. Lastly, our Secretary, Mr. J. Nigam, I.C.S., Director of Industries and Commerce, United Provinces, has been our efficient and tireless collaborator both on the Committee and in the office. The work of assembling material, the production of witnesses, the arrangements for meetings and all other matters

connected with our work, was carefully thought out and planned by him. This has been a matter of peculiar difficulty. For after the end of the public sittings of the Committee on 31st January, the members dispersed to their respective stations. He acted as the liaison officer, and coordinated our work. His ability and particularly his judicial training and experience were of invaluable help to us in our task. To him we owe our sincerest thanks.

## CHAPTER II

### THE WAGE PROBLEM

19. *Importance of the wage question:* Wages have usually formed the main cause of trouble in most labour disputes the world over. Cawnpore has been no exception. The reason for this is obvious. In most countries, and it is daily becoming truer of India also, wages form the major, if not the sole source of the worker's income. His livelihood and that of his entire family depend upon the wages he receives. Income from other sources, if they exist at all, are strictly limited. Amounts so gained are meagre. Supplementary sources of income, in terms of money or real wages, are therefore not an appreciable part of a worker's total income. Hence the matter of the wage-rate and the total amount of wages secured, per unit of time, month or fortnight, is of the supremest importance to him. His welfare and the welfare of all those who depend upon him, are based upon the amount of earnings received. And since the majority of the community consists of wage-earners and their dependants, the well-being of society is intimately connected with the wages received, individually as well as in the aggregate. The wage question is therefore of vital importance.

20. In India it was often said that the wage-rate, or the wage itself, was not of such significance, because the so-called industrial worker was really an agriculturist. He came into industry as a matter merely of tiding over pecuniary difficulty for a period in his village home. He had his secondary source of income, and as soon as there was general improvement in agricultural conditions, he resorted back to his traditional means of gaining his livelihood. This, undoubtedly, was in large measure true. Parenthetically this accounted, amongst other reasons, for the migratory habits of our industrial population. It also formed one of the important causes of the slow development of trade unions, for collective bargaining purposes, even in our main industries. But the present-day facts reveal a situation in the countryside where these old conditions are changing very rapidly. With increasing pressure upon the soil,\* with greater and greater

\*The population of the Province has been increasing rapidly. The mean density per square mile in U.P. increased from 413 in 1881 and 427 in 1921 to 456 in 1931.

fragmentation, holdings are becoming uneconomic. Even our staple crops, for instance wheat, are not so secure in our own markets and mandis. Crops such as wheat, cotton, rice, and sugarcane are elsewhere in the world being more and more scientifically raised and economically handled and marketed. The result is that the position of our food and commercial crops—and incidentally our cattle-raising and dairy-product industries also—has been thoroughly jeopardised. Our village arts and crafts too are being annihilated by the more attractive and cheap machine-made products. For instance, Japanese celluloid dolls are replacing the traditional “Guriya” made of cloth, and the crude toys of the potter are giving way to the more enticing mechanical toys of the West. The extension of the means of transportation is rapidly transforming our tastes and habits in these and other matters. Thus the economic security of life has, for the present, been cut from beneath. The villager is becoming, in ever-increasing numbers, a landless agricultural labourer. He is drifting, slowly but surely, city-ward. He is coming how to stay and not to run away back to his village home. Statistics can be cited to substantiate this trend of the movement of population. City populations are now in increasing proportions being composed of ‘native-born’ people. Hence we must regard the industrial wage of the worker as the mainstay, both of himself and his family. Every large industrial centre, including Cawnpore, has now built up a stable industrial population which regards industry as its life occupation. Indian economy must necessarily shift in this direction, unless disaster is to overtake its vast and rapidly expanding population. The industrial wage is therefore of national significance.

21. *Interests to be considered in determining an equitable wage:* This wage has, however, to be equitable. The theory of marginal productivity is not a mere pastime problem for the intellectual gymnastics of the economists. It is a stern reality of the market place. It is definitely and decidedly the ultimate factor which determines the distribution of the national dividend. Economics of the margin, or “equilibrium economics” still, in theory if not in practice, holds the field. Other agents or factors of production have also to be taken into due regard. Under existing conditions the industrial worker is not the only consideration. The industrialist, the businessman, the technician, the supervisory and administrative functionaries have also to be taken into account. The entrepreneur and the financier play a vital part in the economic organisation of the country. The modernisation of the industrial structure of this land depends very greatly upon their initiative, capacity and energy. Much that has been achieved in India is largely due to their efforts, often against heavy odds. Cawnpore itself is manifestly a monument to the courage and the enterprise of the employers, firstly British, and now British and Indian both. If it is desired that India should be rapidly industrialised, the confidence of the captain of industry and of the financier in the conduct of affairs, should not be impaired. The profit motive has to be kept in mind, unless indeed it is contemplated to transform the very basis of the economic structure of the country.

22. While we accept the importance of the profit motive as a stimulus to



economic enterprise, we at the same time wish to emphasise that the position of the worker must equally be safeguarded and secured. This factor has often not been considered as of much significance. In fact there has been great exploitation. Wages have been the first to suffer for any decline in industry, and the last to benefit from any increase in prosperity. The worker's standard of living appears to have been the last consideration. The various ways and means that have been adopted in other countries to safeguard the worker's position, are here, on the whole, conspicuous by their absence. Profit-motive should not be interpreted to mean indiscriminate profits, particularly in the case of a protected industry. The Textile Tariff Board, 1936, have, for instance, suggested a 6 per cent profit as an adequate return. They have also prescribed proportions for items like depreciation and managing agent's commissions.

23. Besides the worker and the employer, there is yet a third party to be considered. He is no less important. Though be it that he is silent. He is the consumer. He is the ultimate person who pays for the final commodity sold. He, usually, has to bear the higher costs of production, no matter how they may have been incurred. Rising prices and deteriorating quality are very often the dual evils he has quietly to endure. The consumers represent the vast masses of the country. They are unorganised, and, like most consumers, unless they are in the co-operatives, they are non-vocal. The state therefore must keep the interest of the ultimate consumer and his welfare constantly in mind. The endeavour should be to organise economic life in such a fashion as to promote productivity with a tendency to declining prices and improving quality. It is thus alone that material satisfaction and increased content can be secured for the good of the country.

24. *Problem before us:* It is chiefly to investigate this wage question that the present Committee came into existence. According to our terms of reference we are to discover:

- (1) Whether wage cuts have taken place direct or indirect, and, if so, where and to what extent?
- (2) In case any such wage cut is established, whether there should be any increase in wages and if so what?
- (3) How the present rates of wages in Cawnpore compare with those prevailing elsewhere in India, and whether, taking also into consideration the profits made by the mills and the cost of living in Cawnpore, they should be increased and if so to what extent?
- (4) Is it desirable to prescribe any minimum rate of wages for any class of labour at Cawnpore and if so what should such rates be?

25. *Scantiness of available material:* In this connection we have regretfully to record that we were poorly served with the aid of statistics, indispensable in any inquiry of such a nature. Neither with regard to wages nor with regard to cost of living index series, had we much to go by. Unlike Bombay, with its well-

equipped, well-staffed and well-organised Labour Office, which has made several wage census investigations and has records, facts and figures relating to industrial conditions of workers, we had next to nothing to guide and direct us in our enquiry. Such figures as we did obtain cannot be regarded as wholly reliable. The source, the method, and the time of collection somewhat vitiated their value. We desire to state it at once that this lack of accurately collected data is an outstanding defect in the industrial equipment of the Province in general and of Cawnpore in particular. This state of affairs must be rapidly repaired. We make suggestions elsewhere in this connection. We regard these as an essential part of our recommendations.

26. The Employers' Association could not give us much information. Such information as they did eventually supply us, was given piecemeal and after much persuasion. One of the main causes which held up the work of the Committee was this unwillingness and delay on the part of the employers to provide us with the necessary figures. The completed wages statement, which we call the third mill-wise wage statement, we actually received on the eve of our final consideration of the Report. We feel bound to express surprise that the employers have neglected the statistical study of their major industry in Cawnpore. We suggest that they should "rationalise" their system of keeping records of their data. It is vital to their individual as well as to their collective interests to do so. Committees like ourselves would, incidentally, be grateful for such information properly collected and recorded.

27. *The case of the Mazdoor Sabha:* The contention of the workers, as represented by the Mazdoor Sabha, is that there has been both a direct as well as an indirect wage cut as between 1929 and 1937. They also maintain that, apart from the Madras Presidency, the wages in Cawnpore are lower than in Bombay, Ahmedabad and even Sholapur. They say, quoting from the Royal Commission on Indian labour (the figures given are for 1929):

In the United Provinces where Cawnpore is the more important centre the Chief Inspector of Factories gives the rates of wages for male weavers as Rs.33 and for male spinners as Rs.25 per month. In the Punjab, Delhi and Bengal rates stand to rule substantially higher than in the United Provinces (Royal Commission on Labour Report, page 198).

In Bombay the average earnings of the two loom weavers in 19 selected mills varied between Rs.1/9/1 to Rs.2/1/6 per day. This works out a monthly average on the basis of 26 working days in a month from Rs.40/12/2 to Rs.45/7/-, which shows that even the minimum wage at Bombay was higher by 23.5 per cent than Cawnpore wages.

28. They also refer to the Report of the Indian Tariff Board on Textile Industry, 1927, and give the comparative wages for various categories of workers for different textile centres in the country as follows:

TABLE I: *The comparative wages for various categories of workers, for the different textile centres in India*

Standard Muster 1st April, 1926	Bombay	Ahmed- abad	Cawn- pore	Delhi	Nagpur	Madras
	Rs. as.	Rs. as p.	Rs. as. p.	Rs	Rs. as.	Rs. as. p.
Blow room tenters	29 0	23 10 0	16 14 6	19	24 0	25 14 0
Card room tenters	27 4	24 7 6	23 12 0	14	24 0	23 3 3
Frame tenters	37 12	29 6 0	27 3 0	25	30 12	25 2 0
Ring frame side boys	29 12	26 7 6	15 10 0	20	24 0	(a) 14 10 8 (b) 17 15 0
Winders	21 4	23 1 0	27 13 0	25	19 8	21 8 0
Weavers	47 12	47 15 9	32 7 0	35	41 0	34 7 0
Folders	29 0	25 11 3	14 6 0	20	24 0	26 3 5

29. They also give the comparative table furnished by the upper India Chamber of Commerce at Cawnpore.

TABLE II: *The comparative wages furnished by the Upper India Chamber of Commerce, Cawnpore*

	Bombay		Ahmedabad		Cawnpore
	Per day	Monthly	Per day	Monthly	Monthly
	(26 days working)				
	Rs. as. p.	Rs. as. p.	Rs. as. p.	Rs. as. p.	Rs. as. p.
Weaver, 2 looms (Ring frame)	1 13 4	47 10 8	1 13 5	47 12 10	39 1 4
Siders (Mindors)	1 3 0	30 14 0	0 15 2	24 10 4	18 10 6
Tarwalas (Piecers)	0 15 5	25 0 10	Not given		17 6 1
Doffers	0 12 1	18 10 2	0 10 7	17 3 2	12 8 9

30. They proceed to quote from the Tariff Board, 1932, and give the following percentage for the labour costs of production at various textile centres (Table No. III).

31. Some comparative figures compiled from the above sources are given in Table No. IV.

32. And they say:

Thus wages at Cawnpore have throughout been comparatively low. At least the facts do not bear out the assertion that wages at Cawnpore compared favourably with other parts of the country. Though Cawnpore is the next important cotton textile centre in the country after Bombay and Ahmedabad, at times wages of Cawnpore workers have actually been lower than the wages in smaller textile centres like Sholapur, Delhi, Baroda

TABLE III: *The comparative labour costs of various textile centres*

	Per cent	Excess or deficiency as compared with Cawnpore
1. Ahmedabad	— 53.8	13.05
2. Baroda	— 52.65	11.90
3. Delhi	— 51.60	10.85
4. Bombay	— 49.40	8.65
5. Calcutta	— 42.40	1.65
6. Cawnpore	— 40.75	...
7. Nagpur	— 38.60	-2.15

TABLE IV: *The comparative wages for some categories of workers which comprise a high percentage of the total workers in the industry*

	Cawnpore	Bombay	Ahmedabad
	Rs. as. p.	Rs. as. p.	Rs. as. p.
Inter frame tenter	14 0 0	23 15 8	35 3 4
Roving frame tenter	14 0 0	27 10 8	30 14 0
Doffers	12 0 0	14 12 1	18 4 6
Mule (minders)	34 0 0	38 9 0	44 11 6
Side piecers (mule)	22 0 0	25 11 1	35 1 2
Coloured winders	25 3 0	20 9 0	21 10 8
Sizing (mixers)	20 0 0	23 10 0	24 11 1
Weavers (2 looms)	17 8 0 to 20 6 6	33 3 5	49 13 4
Bleaching (bleach croft minder)	14 0 0	21 7 5	23 1 2
Coolies	14 8 0	18 13 5	20 15 10
Sweepers	12 0 0	16 15 4	17 5 0
Fitters	22 8 0	38 14 7	37 7 0

and Calcutta. It is rather paradoxical that the employers at Bombay and Ahmedabad have always demanded wage reductions and protection on the ground that the up-country wage rates are comparatively low which has every time been accepted by the Tariff Boards on the Textile Industry, while the employers at Cawnpore are contending that the wages at Cawnpore compared favourably with those paid in other parts of the country.

33. They proceed to argue that the economic depression began in the year 1929, and went on deepening until 1934. In keeping with other textile centres, Cawnpore also experienced wage cuts. They state:

Although no authentic or official wage statistics are available for this period, the meagre data which we have in our possession goes conclusively to prove that wages at Cawnpore have substantially been reduced during this period.

34. They indicate that the reduction has taken place in various ways classified as follows:

*A. Direct cuts:*

- (i) Reduction in the rates.
- (ii) Reduction through the abolition of bonuses on production and attendance and reduction of dearness allowance, khoraki (midday meal) allowance, and the like.

*B. Indirect cuts:*

- (iii) Introduction of new varieties of cloth at rates which do not bring the wages to the level of those earned on old varieties.
- (iv) Reduction of piece-rates to meet unprecedented high production by individual operatives.
- (v) No adjustments are made consequent upon a substitution of finer for coarser counts.
- (vi) Introduction of inferior raw material which affects output considerably.
- (vii) Short work and consequently loss of time and wages.
- (viii) Introduction of new methods of work involving a reduction in the number of operatives employed and the consequent extra work that has to be looked to by the workers.
- (ix) Changes in the speed of the machine which affect wages in various ways.
- (x) (a) The introduction of the system of giving forced leave instead of the old system of fines which have been limited under the Payment of Wages Act.
- (b) The introduction of differential rates for damaged cloth on the same machine. This is another substitute for the old system of imposing fines.
- (xi) Reduction in the hours of work since January 1935, and the consequent fall in the wages of piece-workers and alterations in the system of the payment of wages to time-workers.
- (xii) Deduction of a fixed percentage from wages for the substitution of old machines by new.
- (xiii) Changes in the cost of living resulting in the reduction of real wages.

35. The memorandum states:

With regard to the direct cut in the wages and bonus it is not possible for us to give exact and detailed information.

But under the reduction or withdrawal of bonuses they estimate the loss to be 12½% in the workers' income. They calculate that the shortening of the hours has meant a 7% cut in workers' wages. They reckon that due to cut in the rates, the decrease in wages averages about 20%. They proceed therefore to say:

The wages on the whole therefore have been reduced by about 40% since the beginning of the economic crisis due to these three factors alone. It is not possible to assign the proper share of other factors in the reduction of wages. But there is no doubt that it is quite so important as to make itself felt and make the workers complain against it very bitterly.

36. *The case of the Employers' Association:* On the other hand, the employers in their memorandum state:

*Answer to Question No. 1.*—There was a difference in the rates of time wages paid by the various mills; this difference being due to unavoidable factors such as age and design of machinery, layout of the factory and quality of the material being worked, etc. Statements have been prepared showing the workers' average earnings of each of the mill members, and, so far as the Association could ascertain, there had been no reduction in the rates of wages paid since 1929.

37. Further they proceed to say:

*Answer to Question No. 4.*—See Association's remarks to question No. 3 (Piece rates for different operations were calculated and based on traditional practical experience and on such factors as speed of machinery, type of material being made, etc.) There has been no reduction in the piece-rates which have adversely affected the earnings of the workers and, in fact, the reverse has obtained, particularly on the weaving side. In this connection consideration must be given to the reduction in the working hours, as now laid down in the Factories Act.

*Answer to Question No. 5.*—When changes are made in piece-rates due to variations in quality of material etc., careful consideration is always given by mill managements to ensure that earnings of the workers should not be reduced below the basic figures as shown in the answers submitted by the various mill members to questions relating to rates of wages paid.

38. *Wage statements supplied by the Employers' Association:* The Employers' Association supplied us three mill-wise wages statements. They refer to eleven principal cotton mills which employ all but a small fraction of the workers in the industry at Cawnpore.

39. The statement which accompanied their memorandum was the following:

TABLE V: *Average monthly wages earned by mill-workers at Cawnpore for the years 1929-37, based on 9 hours per day*

Department	Cawnpore 1929	Cawnpore 1937
	Rs. as. p.	Rs. as. p.
Mixing Room	15-15-3	17-4-3
Blow Room	15-2-3	16-10-5
Cards	15-6-9	17-4-1
Drawings	26-10-9	28-9-2
Slubbers	28-7-3	30-2-2
Inters	25-10-3	26-6-9
Rovers	23-1-9	25-1-11
Rings (Twist)	16-11-9	20-4-9
Rings (Weft)	16-14-0	20-13-5
Mules (Spinners)	33-9-9	34-13-2
Mules (Piecers)	21-6-0	23-0-10
Winding (Old)	19-3-6	23-12-6
Winding (H.S.)	21-6-0	21-11-9
Warping (Old)	38-8-6	42-14-7
Warping (H.S.)	Nil	58-6-2
Sizing (back)	17-7-9	20-9-1
Sizing (front)	27-9-9	32-10-3
Drawers	26-13-9	31-13-2
Weaving	35-3-3	40-0-6

This statement gives the wages for the entire department or for the whole of a particular occupation for the entire industry in Cawnpore. The figures for 1929 as given in this statement were obtained by reducing the actual averages by 10 per cent in order to base them on a 9-hour working day. Wages of mistries and fitters and others are included. It did not show the number of persons employed. Very little could be learnt of the actual situation from such a statement as this. And yet this was all that the Association would let us have. The statement could not be briefer and balder.

40. It was only in the middle of January that we obtained the first mill-wise statement as contained in Table VI. Had even this kind of a statement been supplied to us early in our enquiry, or at least in the beginning of January after the Christmas recess, we could have proceeded more swiftly and satisfactorily with our work.

41. The second statement reached our hands at late as the middle of February. A summary of that statement is contained in Table VII.

42. The third mill-wise statement reached us literally at the eleventh hour, on the night of 10th of March 1938. We had already formulated our chapter on wages, and were to assemble for our final deliberations on the 11th March when we received the completed mill-wise statement.

A summary of this statement is given in Table VIII. Detailed statements on

which the summary is based will be found in Appendix IV. These statements are merely the statements supplied with the summary in Table VII in a completed form. In the earlier statements information regarding two mills which became available had subsequently been omitted.

43. *Analysis of the various millwise statements:* The first millwise statement was compiled on the basis of only those workers, though their number was not disclosed, who had put in a complete 26 days' attendance in the mills. This statement gave only a few categories of occupations and in some cases gave the wages of the Department only. The information thus given was not deemed satisfactory. This statement referred to the month of January for the two years 1929 and 1937.

44. With regard to the second and the third millwise statements, it must be indicated at once that these refer to the month of March in the two respective years, and not to January as in the first statement. The change was made at the request of the members of the Mazdoor Sabha. They contended that January was the best month in the year and the wages for January would not really be a correct representation of the wages position. They thought March to be a more typical month of the year. This month was accordingly selected. Some of the discrepancies therefore that appear between the first and the subsequent statements, must partly be explained on the basis of the change of month. We were informed that actually March proved an even better month than January from the employers' point of view.

45. Both the subsequent statements refer to the same eleven mills. They give the earnings of 31 categories of occupations. These include all the major processes, and can therefore be regarded as representative. These 31 categories represent 13,567 workers out of a total of 23,218. The occupations which have not been included are those which comprise only a few men in each category. They are in the majority of cases on monthly or daily rates. In these statements only a general average for the weavers has been given, while the first statement gave averages separately for wages earned on different widths of looms. The number of workers in each occupation has been given except of one large mill. The percentage of attendance is also recorded. It should also be added that in those statements a comparison has been made of the actual earnings between 1929 (when there was a ten-hour day) and 1937 (when the limit of working hours had been reduced to nine).

46. The second and the third statements are an improvement on the first. In all such statistical work knowledge grows with experience. To record data accurately is a matter of training and proper technique. It cannot be learnt in a day. Discrepancies are therefore bound to arise.

47. *Statement selected for our purpose:* We shall, for our purposes, confine our attention to the third statement. We do so for two reasons. One is that, as we have stated above, the Mazdoor Sabha representatives desired a comparison for the month of March. And secondly this statement is more informative and statistically sounder. It gives the weighted averages.



TABLE VI: *Wages Statement—*

(P=Piece work;

	1929	1932-33	1934	1936	1935
Departments	Swadeshi	A. West	J.K. Cotton	Lakshmi Ratan	J.K. Mfg.
1. Mixing Room	T. '18-8-0	T. 17-1-0	18-0-0	16-0-0	17-0-0
2. Blow Room	T. 19-8-0	T. 17-14-0	18-0-0	17-0-0	17-0-0
3. Cards	T. 18-8-0	T. 17-1-0	18-0-0	16-0-0	16-0-0
4. Drawings	P. 37-8-0	P. 39-13-0	43-8-6	25-6-3	22-6-1
5. Slubbers	P. 37-7-0	P. 43-6-0	43-10-0	25-3-11	22-5-4
6. Inters	P. 22-15-0	P. 37-13-0	34-12-9	27-6-1	22-4-8
7. Rovers	P. 19-0-0	P. 36-0-0	31-12-9	24-11-1	23-7-3
8. Rings (Twist)	T. 19-0-0	P. 21-2-0	18-8-0	18-0-0	18-0-0
9. Rings (Weft)	T. 19-0-0	P. 21-2-0	20-8-0	19-8-0	—
10. Mules (Spars)	—	—	—	—	—
11. Mules (Piecers)	—	—	—	—	—
12. Winding (Old)	P. 17-13-0	P. 20-0-0	17-10-6	19-8-0	
13. Winding (H.S.)	—	—	—	—	
14. Warping (Old)	P. 58-7-0	44-4-0	43-9-3	43-14-5	
15. Warping (H.S.)	—	—	—	—	
16. Sizing (Back)	T. 18-8-0	T. 22.12-0	20-0-0	20-0-0	
17. Sizing (Front)	T. 30-0-0	T. 35-12-0	38-0-0	37-0-0	
18. Drawers	P. 30-6-0	P. 32-9-0	25-1-9	30-15-3	
Weaving:					
26/28"					
29/32"	P. 31-4-0		40-10-6		
33/36"	P. 40-2-0		42-6-9	49-0-0	
37/40"	P. 29-8-0		41-2-9	50-11-10	
41/46"	P. 36-12-0		38-13-0	54-15-1	
47/50"	P. 38-13-0		42-8-3	51-2-9	
51/54"					
55/60"			38-3-6		
61/66"			36-1-9	43-2-1	
67/72"					
78"	P. 25-11-0				
Average for all the above weavers	35-11-6	40-3-0	39-15-3	49-12-9	
		(78" not included)			

1929 or nearest year

T=Fixed wage)

1931	1930	1930	1929	1929	1929
Textile	Juhi	Cawnpore Cotton	Elgin (1864)	Muir	Victoria
23-8-4	15-8-0	15-8-0	(1) 21-5-3	Contract	14-3-3
18-0-0	15-0-0	15-8-0	(2) 16-14-0	T. 15-10-0	14-2-9
18-9-2	15-0-0	15-8-0	(3) 23-13-6	T. 15-10-0	14-1-9
28-4-7	32-0-0	33-9-0	(4) 25-13-4	P. 24-4-0	29-6-3
32-5-0	31-10-0	32-1-0	(5) 35-5-0	P. 25-6-0	28-12-9
29-14-4	28-0-0	28-11-0	(6) 32-0-0	P. 23-12-6	27-4-9
27-8-2	25-0-0	25-13-0	(7) 25-5-0	P. 19-9-9	24-0-0
19-7-0	—	24-15-0	(8) 15-10-0	T. 16-4-0	15-1-6
—	—	—	(9) 15-10-0	T. 14-14-0	—
—	37-0-0	37-12-0	(10) 37-6-3	P. 32-13-0	41-0-0
—	26-0-0	24-4-0	(11) 25-12-0	T. 20-15-0	21-0-1
20-6-10	—	19-13-0	(12) 23-3-6	P. 24-11-0	27-13-0
23-11-9			(13)		
25-9-11		34-11-0	(14) 49-1-6	P. 42-0-0	43-14-0
29-15-7			(15)		
18-4-6		20-5-0	(16) 20-7-0	T. 16-4-0	18-3-0
28-0-6		29-4-0	(17) 29-3-0	T. 22-8-0	26-8-6
34-8-3		28-9-0	(18) 26-13-3	P. 22-12-3	37-2-0
(1935)					
29-11-0		36-0-0	40-14-0	P. 36-12-0	31-4-4
		37-5-00		P. 37-8-0	—
35-7-8		37-14-0	42-0-0	P. 30-1-0	39-12-0
32-3-8		38-15-0	38-5-0		42-3-7
					47-14-9
		37-11-0	43-8-0	P. 30-8-0	
		35-12-0	45-0-0	P. 28-6-0	
32-7-5		37-1-6	41-15-0	34-10-2	40-0-10

TABLE VI (Contd.): Wages

P= Piece work;

Departments	Swadeshi	A. West	J.K. Cotton	Lakshmi Ratan	J.K. Mfg.
Mixing Room	T. 18-8-0	17-1-0	18-0-0	16-0-0	17-0-0
Blow Room	T. 19-8-0	17-14-0	18-0-0	17-0-0	17-0-0
Cards	T. 18-8-0	17-14-0	18-0-0	16-0-0	16-0-0
Drawings	P. 29-8-0	40-14-0	31-8-0	27-6-7	22-3-6
Slubbers	P. 27-13-0	42-3-0	33-5-3	26-4-2	20-9-10
Inters	P. 34-9-0	36-15-0	25-3-0	30-3-0	20-12-2
Rovers	P. 30-9-0	25-3-0	21-0-0	40-4-2	24-7-11
Rings (Twist)	T. 19-0-0	21-2-0	18-8-0	26-0-0	18-0-0
Rings (Weft)	T. 19-0-0		20-8-0	27-0-0	
Mules (Spars)					
Mules (Piecers)					
Winding (Old)	P. 17-15-0	22-8-0	17-6-0	22-13-7	
Winding (H.S.)	P. 19-12-0	25-1-0	21-8-0		
Warping (Old)	P. 47-1-0	34-3-0	42-4-3	42-0-10	
Warping (H.S.)	P. 40-12-0	63-7-0			
Sizing (Back)	T. 21-0-0	22-12-0	22-0-0	20-0-0	
Sizing (Front)	T. 33-0-0	36-12-0	38-0-0	37-0-0	
Drawers	P. 27-3-0	46-15-0	26-3-3	24-13-1	

## Weaving:

26/28"	P. 35-11-0			
29/32"	P. 34-5-0		35-12-11	
33/36"	P. 35-9-0		37-10-0	49-0-4
37/40"			37-11-9	50-5-8
41/46"	P. 37-5-0		34-12-0	
47/50"	P. 38-13-0		34-12-3	53-2-3
51/54"				
55/60"			41-8-6	53-13-7
61/66"				
67/72"				
78"	38-5-0			

Average for all the  
above weavers

35-13-6

40-5-0

37-7-0

52-0-8

(78" not included)

## Statement—1937

T=Fixed wage)

Textile	Juhi	Cawnpore Cotton	Elgin (a)	Muir	Victoria	Narayan
20-0-6	15-8-0	14-14-0	(1) 29-1-6	Contract	13-13-6	10-0
17-14-0	15-4-0	15-5-0	(2) 17-1-0	T. 15-10-0	14-11-0	14-10
22-9-0	15-4-0	15-5-0	(3) 21-12-9	T. 15-10-0	14-8-0	14-10
27-11-4	26-5-0	25-9-0	(4) 23-13-3	25-5-0	33-4-3	29-6
28-8-0	26-5-0	25-3-0	(5) 31-2-3	24-14-9	34-7-9	30-14
29-14-8	22-13-0	22-6-0	(6) 28-7-9	24-0-9	28-2-3	23-10
27-5-8	22-4-0	21-6-0	(7) 26-14-0	21-0-9	26-14-2	24-2
20-6-1		23-9-0	(8) 22-4-0	T. 16-4-0	17-14-0	
19-6-8		23-15-0	(9) 21-1-3	T. 16-14-0	18-1-9	21-10
	35-13-0	35-6-0	(10) 21-13-3	30-0-0	42-1-6	
	25-11-0	23-5-0	(11) 23-4-9	T. 20-15-0	21-1-3	
27-11-3		16-7-0	(12) 24-0-3	27-6-0	34-2-0	27-8
28-12-9		11-9-0	(13)			
43-15-8		52-7-0	(14) 38-4-3	44-12-0	41-3-0	
50-4-9		71-1-0	(15)			
18-4-6		21-2-0	(16) 20-7-9	T. 16-4-0	23-3-9	
28-7-0		35-12-0	(17) 29-4-0	T. 88-8-0	34-1-6	
32-13-5		32-9-0	(18) 30-1-9	28-10-0	37-2-0	
					32-5-6	
39-0-8		38-1-0	35-0-0	34-3-0		
		37-9-0		34-1-0	44-11-5	
41-4-6		38-9-8	36-1-0	32-5-9	44-15-7	
41-13-4		39-14-0	40-13-0		45-13-6	
		43-2-0	37-12-0	35-14-0		
		41-8-0	35-10-3	38-8-0		
40-11-6		39-13-0	37-1-0	35-0-0	41-15-6	

TABLE VII: *Summary*

Category No. Designation	Earnings per month		Earnings per hour		Earnings per hour	
	1929*	1937	1929*	1937	Decrease	Increase
1. T. Opener Attdts.	Rs. 16.94	Rs. 16.51	as. 1.042	1.129	—	8.35
2. T. Scutcher	16.82	16.06	1.035	1.098	—	6.08
3. T. Lap Carriers	17.84	17.50	1.098	1.196	—	8.92
4. T. Card Mc. Attdts.	16.26	16.66	1.000	1.139	—	13.90
5. T. Fly Gatherers	18.25	18.49	1.123	1.264	—	12.55
6. T. Strippers & Grds.	17.13	17.48	1.054	1.195	—	13.40
7. P. Drawing Tenters	27.85	27.81	1.714	1.867	—	8.94
8. P. Slubbing Tenters	31.87	30.61	1.961	2.093	—	6.73
9. P. Inter Tenters	29.90	26.44	1.790	1.808	—	1.00
10. P. Roving Tenters	26.26	22.23	1.616	1.520	5.95%	—
11. T. Doffers Carding	12.20	12.01	.751	.821	—	9.32
12. T. Doffers Spinning	12.98	13.24	.799	.912	—	14.16
13. T.P. Siders	17.57	19.68	1.081	1.346	—	24.51
14. T. Doubling Tenters	16.70	15.75	1.028	1.077	—	4.75
15. P. Reelers	18.93	14.83	1.165	1.014	12.95%	—
16. P. Grey Winders (O.T.)	18.26	18.57	1.124	1.269	—	12.90
17. P. Grey Winders (H.S.)	23.18	22.76	1.426	1.556	—	9.12
18. P. Warpers (O.T.)	41.44	36.79	2.550	2.515	1.37	—
19. P. Warpers (H.S.)	38.40	59.68	2.363	4.081	—	72.72
20. T. Warping Creelers	14.05	14.75	.865	1.008	—	16.53
21. T. Front Sizers	31.80	32.40	1.957	2.216	—	13.24
22. T. Back Sizers	20.25	20.12	1.246	1.376	—	10.42
23. P. Drawers-in	28.28	31.30	1.740	2.140	—	22.98
24. P. Reachers	13.25	14.03	.815	.959	—	17.67
25. P. Weavers	37.88	37.03	2.331	2.253	—	8.61
26. P.T. Folders Machine	16.27	15.30	1.001	1.046	—	4.50
27. P. Folders Hand	15.70	16.45	.971	1.125	—	15.87
28. T. Coolies	—	—	—	—	—	—
29. T. Oil Men	17.02	16.07	1.047	1.099	—	4.96
30. T. Sweepers (D)	12.80	13.50	.788	.923	—	17.13
31. T. Sweepers (Compound)	12.40	12.44	.763	.851	—	11.54

\*or nearest year.

48. *Its limitations:* At the same time we must state that owing to the very belated submission of the statement, we were not in a position to cross-examine the representatives of the Employers' Association with regard to the methods adopted in its preparation. There are several doubtful points. In the first place, we have not been told whether the number of working days in March of the two years was the same. Nor are we clear how the different mills have calculated the average earnings per month. Our work would have been simplified to a certain extent if the statement had disclosed the actual wages bill for each category.

49. *Conclusions to be drawn from it:* Subject to these limitations, the broad fact emerges that out of the 31 categories, 12 categories show a decrease in

TABLE VIII

Category	Earnings per month		Earnings per hour		Earnings per hour	
No. Designation	1929*	1937	1929*	1937	Decrease	Increase
1. Opener Attendants	16.35	16.03	1.006	1.095	—	8.94%
2. Scutcher	16.12	15.70	.992	1.074	—	8.26%
3. Lap Carriers	17.15	16.92	1.055	1.157	—	9.67%
4. Card Mc. Attdts.	15.90	16.15	.978	1.104	—	12.88%
5. Fly Gatherers	17.31	17.41	1.065	1.190	—	11.73%
6. Strippers and Grds.	16.46	16.59	1.013	1.134	—	11.94%
7. Drawing Tenters	25.23	28.00	1.553	1.914	—	23.25%
8. Slubbing Tenters	27.75	29.07	1.707	1.998	—	16.46%
9. Inter Tenters	25.84	25.52	1.590	1.745	—	9.75%
10. Roving Tenters	23.80	21.69	1.465	1.483	1.22%	—
11. Doffers Carding	12.06	11.45	.742	.783	—	5.52%
12. Doffers Spinning	12.53	12.60	.771	.867	—	12.45%
13. Siders	17.63	18.84	1.085	1.288	—	18.71%
14. Doubling Tenters	16.74	17.10	1.030	1.169	—	13.50%
15. Reelers	15.69	12.15	.966	.831	13.96%	—
16. Grey Winders (O.T.)	20.05	19.92	1.233	1.362	—	10.45%
17. Grey Winders (H.S.)	23.18	22.75	1.426	1.556	—	9.12%
18. Warpers (O.T.)	40.17	38.05	2.472	2.602	—	5.26%
19. Warpers (H.S.)	38.40	59.68	2.363	4.081	—	72.72%
20. Warping Creelers	14.14	14.83	.870	1.014	—	16.55%
21. Front Sizers	29.20	31.80	1.797	2.175	—	21.03%
22. Back Sizers	19.61	20.61	1.206	1.409	—	16.83%
23. Drawers-in	26.57	30.47	1.635	2.084	—	27.46%
24. Reachers	12.65	13.65	.788	.933	—	19.92%
25. Weavers	36.67	37.07	2.256	2.535	—	12.36%
26. Folders Machine	16.01	15.15	.985	1.036	—	5.18%
27. Folders Hand	15.86	15.58	.976	1.134	—	16.19%
28. Coolies	—	—	—	—	—	—
29. Oilmen	17.02	16.07	1.047	1.099	—	4.96%
30. Sweepers (D)	12.64	13.33	.778	.912	—	17.92%
31. Sweepers (Compound)	12.40	12.44	.763	.851	—	11.54%

\*or nearest year.

monthly earnings as between 1929 and 1937. On the other hand, 18 categories show an increase. Regarding one category, namely of Coolies, no comparable figures are given. The range of decrease in monthly earnings is from Rs.3.54 or 22.6 per cent in the case of Reelers to Re.0.13 or 0.6 per cent in the case of Lap Carriers. The range of increase has been from Rs.21.28 or 55.4 per cent in the case of Warpers (high speed type machines), down to Re.0.04 or 0.3 per cent in the case of Sweepers (compound). It is impossible to reach any other conclusion of a less general or a more precise character. The Mazdoor Sabha's contention that wages had been cut down by 40 per cent was based on the evidence presumably of a certain number of workers from some of the mills. In arriving at this conclusion

the Mazdoor Sabha did not take into account certain important factors. We mean to cast no reflection by this remark on those responsible for the Mazdoor Sabha's memorandum and in particular Mr. Shitla Prasad Saxena. In fact, against great odds, with limited resources at their disposal, and with no co-operation whatsoever from the employers they were able to collect much data which has proved helpful. But it is likely that only those who had lost a portion of their earnings brought their grievances to the notice of the Sabha, while those who had either not had any cut in their wage or even had an increase did not conceivably bring this fact to their notice. Secondly, it is not clear from the Memorandum of the Mazdoor Sabha whether in arriving at this conclusion any attention had been paid to the question whether the workers who complained of a drop in wages had suffered a cut in wages through any action on the part of the employers or because of irregular attendance. It is possible and even likely that an element of inaccuracy would creep into statements made from memory by the workers regarding wages earned by them eight or nine years ago.

50. At the same time, it is not possible to accept the employers' statement that there has hardly been any drop in the wages between 1929 and 1937 in any category. It may be noted that while they attributed the apparent drop in wages to a reduction in working hours from 10 to 9 between these two years, in evidence most of their representatives admitted before the Committee that the workers have been able to make good by approximately 5 per cent in a large number of cases, due to increased efficiency, whether of man or machine, or possibly both.

51. The cuts have occurred more in the lower-paid than in the higher paid categories. If the latter were excluded from the general calculations, the overall decrease would seem to be greater. Also, the question has to be considered how far the increase in the higher paid categories was due to rationalisation in certain mills. Another point to be borne in mind is that the annual bonuses have not been included in the employers' figures. It is true that only a few mills pay these, and of course the employers contest the point that they are part of earnings. For that reason, while monthly bonuses have been taken into account, annual bonuses have not. We have dealt with the question of annual bonus elsewhere. But for the worker a bonus is an addition to his earnings and for that reason welcome however the employer may regard it.

52. There is yet another point. It is admitted that with the coming into operation of the Payment of Wages Act, there has been a cut in the workers' earnings through increasing resort to suspension or forced leave of a fairly drastic character in some mills; also the payment of differential rates for so-called good, bad or indifferent work. We have condemned this practice in another chapter. Here it is sufficient to say that it has the effect of lowering wages by an appreciable amount in the mills in which the practice has obtained. The employers' figures are all based on 26 days' full work in a month, making no allowance for leave, whether voluntary or forced, playing off, differential rates of payment, etc., all of which must reduce the actual figure considerably. Precisely by how much, we are unable to determine, without the total wages bill before us.

53. A third point that is relevant is that not all mills have supplied us with 1929 figures. One or two were not in existence in that year. But some alleged that their records had been destroyed by white ants and therefore they were unable to go back to 1929. But whatever the reason, the fact remains that the comparison is not with 1929 figures in a number of cases and therefore allowance must also be made for this factor.

54. In the summary attached to their detailed wages statements they have shown the earnings per month in 31 different categories in 1929 and 1937 respectively. They have also worked out the earnings per hour in these two years and come to the conclusion that there has been a decrease in earnings (per hour) only in two categories and an increase in 28. But from the summary itself it is obvious that there has been a diminution in earnings on a monthly basis in 12 categories. To take a few instances, the average earnings per month of Opener Attendants dropped from 16.35 to 16.03; but according to the employers there was an increase of 8.94 per cent in the earnings per hour. Again, in the case of Inter Tenters, though there was a drop from 25.84 to 25.52, on the employers' calculation there was an increase by 9.75 per cent. Quite clearly, therefore, the millowners' contention cannot be accepted. The difficulty of arriving at any conclusions on the general question whether there has been a rise or drop in wages may be illustrated from another point of view. Carding Machine Attendants' earnings have risen from 15.90 to 16.15, representing, on the employers' statement, an increase of 12.88 per cent. Actually, however, of a total number of 126 workers for whom comparative average earnings are given only 48 had an increase in wages while 46 had a decrease. It cannot be a source of satisfaction to these 46 that because of an increase in wages in some other mills for workers in the same department the general average wage rate has risen. Again, in the case of the Spinning Doffers, though the average has risen from 12.53 to 12.68, of a total of 617 in all the mills for whom details are given 312 had an increase and 209 a decrease in their earnings. Conversely, where there has been a decline in the average earnings it does not follow that every worker included in that category has suffered a decrease. There must be some who have earned an increase. It is seldom that one comes across in the statement instances of either a general rise or a general drop in wages in all the mills. Mention, however, may be made of Reelers whose average has dropped from 15.69 to 12.15 owing to a decrease of wages in practically all the mills, though even this has not been on a uniform basis.

55. An analysis of the wages statements is given as Table IX in regard to the 31 main categories.

56. These figures illustrate vividly the point to which we refer again in the chapter on Standardisation that there has never been any attempt made in the past to bring about a standardization in wage-rates. They vary consequently in the most chaotic fashion. Lap Carriers in some mills get over Rs.22, while in others they drop down to Rs.14 and even Rs.11/6. Similarly the wages of Carding Machine Attendants range from Rs.10/11/- to Rs.22/8/6. Drawing



TABLE IX: *Earnings per month as between 1929 and 1937**A. Decrease:*

No. Designation	No. of men in 1937	Decrease in rupee	Percentage increase
1. Opener Attendants	71	0.32	2.0
2. Scutcher Tenters	124	0.42	2.6
3. Lap Carriers	94	0.23	1.3
4. Inter Tenters	254	0.32	1.2
5. Roving	546	2.11	8.9
6. Doffers Carding	594	0.61	5.1
7. Reelers	1,161	3.54	22.6
8. Grey Winders (Old Type Machine)	627	0.13	0.6
9 Grey Winders (H.S.)	142	0.42	1.8
10. Warpors (O.T.)	124	2.12	5.3
11. Folders Machine	113	0.86	5.4
12. Oil Men	87	0.95	5.6

*B. Increase:*

No. Designation	Men (1937)	Increase in rupee	Percentage increase
1. Card Mc. Attendants	139	0.25	1.6
2. Fly Gatherers	46	0.10	0.6
3. Strippers & Grds.	130	0.13	0.8
4. Drawing Tenters	401	2.77	11.0
5. Slubbing Tenters	152	1.32	4.8
6. Doffers Spinning	790	0.15	1.2
7. Siders	1,153	1.21	6.9
8. Doubling Tenters	89	0.36	2.2
9. Warpors (H.S.)	8	21.28	55.4
10. Warping Creelers	77	0.69	4.9
11. Front Sizers	83	2.60	8.9
12. Back Sizers	87	0.79	4.0
13. Drawers-in	161	3.90	4.7
14. Reachers	172	1.00	7.9
15. Weavers	4,895	0.39	1.1
16. Folders Hand	207	0.72	4.5
17. Sweepers (D)	128	0.69	5.5
18. Sweepers (Compound)	112	0.04	0.3

Tenters' wages range between Rs.14/12/3 and Rs.40/15/5. Slubbing Tenters' wages vary between Rs.15/10/11 and Rs.43/6/8. Those for Inter Tenters range between Rs.12/15/8 and Rs.38/1/4. Roving Tenters' wages range between Rs.13/15/- and Rs.37/2/8. Grey Winders' wages range between Rs.10/5/- and Rs.27/-/6. The minimum and maximum for Warpors (old type machine) are

Rs.21/6/7 and Rs.47/1/- respectively. Drawers'-in wages range between Rs.23/9/6 and Rs.43/14/5.

57. *Overall decrease nominal:* The position regarding the over-all increase or decrease of wages, as between 1929 and 1937, is that the weighted average earnings per month, in 1929, for these 30 categories as a whole were Rs.25.09 and in 1937 Rs.24.90. That is to say there has been a decrease in average monthly earnings of Re.0.19 or 0.76 per cent. These figures include the bonuses paid on a monthly basis but not the annual bonus.

58. A word of caution is necessary in regard to the above figures. In calculating them most of the high paid categories were included, while many of the low-paid workers, including the Coolies, were excluded. It follows therefore that the average given above cannot apply to the industry as a whole. Further, these averages have been calculated on the basis of a 26-day month, while in actual practice the number of working days on the average is only 25 a month.

59. *Can the industry bear an increase in wages?* Having thus dealt with the question of wage-cuts, we have now to consider whether there should be any increase in wages. But before we give our award in this connection, it is necessary that we should examine whether it is possible for the industry now to bear an additional burden. According to our terms of reference we have also to take into account the disparity in the wage levels between Cawnpore and other centres and its relation to the cost of living.

60. *Decline in the prices of agricultural commodities:* It is admitted that 1929 was a prosperous year. Since then the world has been in the throes of a depression. India too has suffered, though with a time lag. It is certain that its agriculture had a severe set-back. The prices of most of the agricultural commodities declined as shown in the following table:

TABLE X: *Index numbers of agricultural wholesale prices  
in U.P. (1913=100)*

Year	General Index Number
1929	116
1930	114
1931	78
1932	85
1933	80
1934	77
1935	87
1936	82
1937	92

61. Due to this cataclysmic decline of agriculture prices, the agriculturist's debt burden, and other fixed payment obligations, impoverished him considerably, and very greatly diminished his purchasing power. The Indian

peasant after all is the most important buyer of the Indian cotton mills' product in aggregate. For, as is well known, the great bulk, if not the whole amount, of our mill production is consumed in the home market. Only about 2 to 3 per cent of the total production finds foreign markets.

62. *Its effect on textile industry counterbalanced by other factors:* This situation naturally would have led to a deterioration of the Indian mills' position. But for various reasons the Indian cotton mill industry made steady progress. One important reason is the increasing efficiency in the methods of production. There was a steady, almost rapid, decline of imports of cotton manufactures from England. This decline of supply of yarn and piece-goods from abroad was made good by the Indian cotton mills manufactures as would appear from the following table:

TABLE XI: Table showing the imports of piece-goods excluding fents into India from United Kingdom, Japan and other countries

Year	(Quantity in millions of yards)			Mill production in India
	United Kingdom	Japan	Total from all countries	
1929-30	1,236	562	1,882	2,419
1930-31	520	321	882	2,561
1931-32	376	340	753	2,990
1932-33	586	579	1,193	3,170
1933-34	415	341	761	2,945
1934-35	552	374	944	3,397
1935-36	440	495	947	3,571
1936-37	334	417	764	3,572

63. *Expansion of the textile industry in Cawnpore:* It has to be stated that in this increased supply of cotton goods to the Indian market Cawnpore is rapidly increasing its share. The figures in the following tables, XII to XIV, show without mistake that between the years 1929 to 1937 Cawnpore has gained much ground.

64. It will appear that the quantity of woven goods in the U.P. (in millions of yards) rose from 98.8 in 1929 to 237.0 in 1937 (vide Table XIIIc). In other words, there was an increase of about 140 per cent. This compares very favourably indeed with the all-India increase between these years, from 2,419 to 3,572, or of about 47 per cent. The figures for Cawnpore alone are not available. But we have reasons to believe that it is responsible for the vast bulk of the woven goods produced in the U.P.

65. A study of the variations in the number of spindles and looms installed at Cawnpore shows that although there was a fall in the number of spindles between 1930 and 1934 by an average of 4.6 per cent, the deficiency was more than made up by 1937 when it rose by 17.7 per cent as compared with the year 1929. The rise in

TABLE XII: Abstract statement of the quantity of yarn spun (in lbs.) and woven goods manufactured in India &amp; U.P.

Description	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
Yarn (British India).	557662489	730819223	753665250	848159268	885772179	796711430	852576800	903249122	890584020
Yarn (U.P.)	60338343	7656493	85049326	89817642	93129775	93865034	99701305	107945925	115002739
Loth (British India)	376384893	484620732	507870345	585294965	597951966	551398085	621548177	63749909	650755442
Loth (U.P.)	25698030	30339280	33954435	36369851	41466090	47410390	54264876	53717883	62922007

TABLE XIII (a): U.P. mill industry

Sl. No.	Year	No. of mills	Average No. of spindles at work daily	Average No. of looms at work daily	Approximate quantity of cotton consumed in bales during the year	Average No. of workers employed daily	Total No. of days between 1/9/- to 31/8/-
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	1929	24	5,79,510	7,623	1,67,164	23,998	Data not available
	1930	24	6,14,308	8,151	19,768	25,130	281
	1931	23	6,23,792	8,262	2,23,522	Not given	297
	1932	22	6,26,919	8,273	2,51,320	26,637	270
	1933	22	6,38,048	8,505	2,78,006	27,476	263
	1934	22	6,15,741	8,491	2,80,520	27,286	272
	1935	25	6,21,939	8,824	2,97,282	28,105	261
	1936	25	6,64,769	9,915	3,19,740	30,118	273

TABLE XIII (b): Detailed statement of the quantity (in million lbs.) and the counts of yarn spun in United Provinces

Counts	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1934-35	1935-36	1936-37
1s to 10s	8292618	10368733	14377236	16307414	16053259	15744859	19655678	19495485	19711515
11s to 20s	37884662	50110355	53538036	53858366	54686534	53013393	53154692	58180156	59186756
21s to 30s	12254372	12888282	13910434	16488344	19100422	22962571	26578785	27942904	30896564
31s to 40s	1343700	1819139	1998270	1805079	1971295	861843	724581	1347833	2910298
Above 40s	426282	1124324	1042903	1199335	1045934	933748	956459	224793	42195
Waste etc.	126713	145649	182447	159104	272331	348720	415001	829008	22554113
Grand Total	60328347	76456492	85049326	89817643	93129775	93365634	99701305	108020179	115002739

TABLE XIII (c): Statement of the quantity in millions of yards and description of woven goods manufactured in U.P.

Description	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
Chudars	2.7	2.3	3.1	4.1	2.7	5.6	3.5	3.0	4.0
Dhoties	52.0	64.0	69.4	86.6	102.2	112.7	127.1	119.3	133.7
Drills & Jeans	3.5	4.1	3.5	2.9	3.5	4.2	3.5	3.7	4.7
Cambrie & Lawns	.2	.1	1.9	1.6	.5	.0	.1	.1	.4
Printers	1.7	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.0	.6	3.0	2.4	4.3
Shirting & Longcloth	9.6	12.3	13.9	9.2	9.2	12.9	14.0	16.8	27.4
T.-Cloth & Shirtings	17.6	21.0	25.1	28.8	31.0	30.6	44.7	42.9	44.4
Tent Cloth	1.7	1.3	0.9	.6	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.3	2.7
Khaddar	.8	.3	1.5	.6	.5	.4	1.1	1.5	1.7
Other sorts	2.1	1.9	1.7	20.0	2.5	2.5	1.6	3.1	3.1
Total	91.9	108.9	122.5	138.1	154.6	172.4	200.2	194.6	226.9
Grand Total (Coloured piece-goods and miscellaneous mixed goods)	98.5	117.9	130.0	144.2	162.8	180.7	209.4	204.3	236.9

TABLE XIV (a): *Abstract statement of cotton mills in Cawnpore, U.P.*

Serial No.	Year	Number of mills	No. of spindles installed	No. of spindles working daily average	No. of looms installed	Average No. of looms at work daily	Approx. quantity of cotton consumed in bales	Average No. of workers employed	Average total of days worked from 1st Sep. to 31st Aug.
1.	1929	10	4,70,916	4,40,961	7,774	7,322	1,35,524	14,014	Not available
2.	1930	10	4,76,242	4,64,246	7,914	7,662	1,62,376	18,495	288
3.	1931	10	4,73,946	4,46,963	7,882	7,525	1,55,678	19,568	293
4.	1932	10	4,68,252	4,50,179	7,911	7,490	1,70,940	19,583	274
5.	1933	11	4,75,828	4,55,449	7,930	7,646	1,92,874	20,285	274
6.	1934	11	4,49,408	4,32,530	8,327	7,685	1,97,506	18,410	299
7.	1935	13	5,29,843	4,55,758	9,236	8,019	2,18,602	21,152	304
8.	1936	13	8,47,834	5,08,661	9,796	9,102	2,43,910	23,218	303
9.	1937	13	5,54,225	5,13,719	10,257	9,746	2,44,340	23,627	298

TABLE XIV (b): *Mill statement for India*

Year	No. of mills	No. of spindles installed	No. of looms installed	Av. No. of hands employed daily	App. No. of bales of cotton consumed
1929	344	89,07,064	1,74,992	3,46,925	21,61,100
1930	348	91,24,768	1,79,280	3,84,022	25,93,714
1931	339	93,11,953	1,82,420	3,95,475	28,33,175
1932	340	95,05,083	1,86,341	4,03,223	29,11,264
1933	344	95,71,662	1,39,040	4,00,005	26,27,158
1934	352	95,13,174	1,94,936	3,84,938	27,10,890
1935	385	96,85,175	1,98,867	4,14,834	21,23,414
1936	379	98,56,658	2,00,062	4,17,803	31,09,618

the number of looms was 31.9%. The corresponding rises for the rest of India in 1936 were 8.9 and 12.2 per cent respectively.

66. The average number of working days in all the textile mills at Cawnpore between 1930 and 1936 were as follows:

Years:	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
Average number of working days per year	299	293	299	274	299	304	302.5	298

The all-India average, excluding Cawnpore, for the year 1936 was 297. Thus there has been an increase in the number of working days by slightly more than one per cent over 1930 and about two per cent over the average of the rest of the country. The figure for 1937 has been affected by the strikes in that year and to that extent uncomparable with the other figures.

67. Another clue to the expansion of the industry is provided by the figures of cotton consumption per year given in Table XIV. In this case an important consideration will be the counts of yarn spun. The spinning of finer counts might show a lower cotton consumption, even though the production actually goes up. From the evidence left before us we conclude that in the case of Cawnpore, taking all the mills together, the tendency in recent years has on the whole been to go finer. One mill during the course of its evidence said that it had gone seventeen counts finer. An increase of 80 per cent in the quantity of cotton consumed may, therefore, mean a still higher percentage of increased production, due to the tendency of going in for finer counts.

68. *Prosperity of the cotton textile industry in Cawnpore:* The question now arises whether this expansion is an index of the prosperity of the industry. We are satisfied that the expansion is due to the industry attracting more capital on account of its prosperity; but we have to refute the likely contention that the position of the industry was so precarious that it was necessary to expand the existing plant or to work a longer number of hours per day in order to reduce the

TABLE XIV (c): Statement of the quantity in millions of yards and description of woven goods manufactured in U.P.

Description	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
Chaddars	2.7	2.3	3.1	4.1	2.7	5.6	3.5	3.08	4.01
Dhoties	52.06	64.05	69.4	86.6	102.2	112.7	127.1	119.35	133.76
Drills & Jeans	3.5	4.1	3.5	2.9	3.5	4.2	3.5	3.73	4.79
Cambrie & Lawns.	.2		1.9	1.6	.6	.09	1	.11	.4
Printers	1.7	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.0	.6	3.0	2.46	4.3
Shirting & Longcloth	9.6	12.3	13.9	9.2	9.2	12.9	14.0	16.84	27.4
T. Cloth & Sheetings	17.2	21.0	25.1	28.8	31.0	30.6	44.7	42.9	44.4
Tent Cloth	1.7	1.3	.9	.6	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.3	2.7
Khaddar	.8	.3	1.5	.6	.5	1.4	1.1	1.5	1.7
Other sorts	2.1	1.9	1.7	20.08	2.5	2.5	1.6	3.1	3.1
Total	91.9	108.9	122.5	138.12	154.6	172.4	200.2	194.6	226.9
Coloured piece-goods lbs.	6.8	8.9	7.4	6.08	8.1	8.3	9.1	9.7	9.9
Grey & coloured other than piece-goods lbs.	.5	.7	.8	.83	.9	.8	.7	.8	1.0
osiery lbs.	.05	.09	.1	.13	.1	.1	.2	.5	.6
Miscellaneous goods lbs.	.6	.04	.1	.06	.03	.08	.08	.01	.05
Mixed with wool and silk lbs.	.001	.01	.02	.02	.0003	—	—	.00004	.00002
Grand Total yds.	98.8	117.9	130.0	144.2	162.8	180.7	209.4	204.3	236.9



overhead charges per piece of cloth woven and thus to recapture the market at depressed prices, or, in other words, to recoup the losses by savings in the total cost of production. It would have been easy to find out the true position if detailed information regarding the profits and losses of the various mills had been available, but even in the absence of this information, the position can be ascertained on the basis of circumstantial evidence and the implications of certain tendencies and facts which have struck us during the course of our enquiry.

69. The expansion of the industry began in 1935 when the process of economic recovery had begun and the price level was rising. If the industry had been expanded for meeting losses, expansion would have taken place during the period of acute depression. On the other hand, between 1930 and 1934 when the depression was deepening, the mills at Cawnpore acted in just the reverse way by following a policy of reducing the number of spindles and looms in order to restrict production. This means that the mills tried to push up the prices by controlling the supply even at the cost of higher overhead charges per piece of cloth woven.

70. Then, again, the expansion which began in 1935 did not mean an extension of the old plant only. As a matter of fact, some of the important mills, e.g. the Cawnpore Cotton Mills Co. Ltd. (Kakori) and the Juggilal Kamlatpat Cotton Spinning and Weaving Mills did not increase their spindles and looms at all; rather, they reduced them to some extent. The Cawnpore Textiles Ltd. curtailed the number of their working spindles rather heavily. Further, the expansion in the industry was not confined only to working double shifts instead of a single shift. If this was the only method of expansion it could be taken as a process of doubling the number of looms and the spindles. During the depression only a few mills worked double shifts. The fact is that as many as three new mills with a total spindlage of 49,600 and a total loomage of 803 were started during the period. The starting of new mills necessarily indicates attraction of new capital to the industry—most likely due to comparative advantage in investment. Coupled with this, the extension of the old plant and the additions to spindles and looms may also be taken to be further signs of prosperity in the industry which were visible at the beginning of the process of recovery.

71. There is yet another factor which may be taken into consideration, namely, the cost of production and its relation to market prices of cloth. Here again, all the details of the expenses of production are not available. So far as wages are concerned, there has certainly been a slight decrease; while even the millowners admit that there has been an improvement in the efficiency of production after the introduction of the nine-hour day. Thus the incidence of labour cost has certainly decreased. Details of other expenses except the cost of raw material are not available. If the cost of raw material, which is the heaviest single factor, can serve as any guide, its course during the period under enquiry has been a source of strength to the industry. The reduction in the price of raw cotton during the years of depression and even for the last three years 1935 to 1937 has been more than

the fall in the price of the cloth.

72. The following table gives the indices of the prices of raw cotton and cloth:

Years:	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
Index No. of cotton prices at Cawnpore*	100	58	45	50	43	44	46	51	53
Index No. of prices of cloth in India†	100	97	88	88	82	87	82	75	75
Excess of reduction in cotton prices over cloth prices‡	39	43	38	39	43	29	8	24	22

\*Collected from *Agricultural Prices in U.P.*

†Statistics of Sea-Borne Trade in India.

‡On the basis of information given by the Employers' Association.

In 1937-38, there has been a very heavy fall in the prices of cotton while the prices of cloth have not taken the same course.

This analysis again shows that expansion is due more to better prospects in the industry than to other factors.

73. In further support of our conclusion we now turn to such figures relating to profits as are available to us. The *Investor's India Year Book* gives a few published balance sheets for Cawnpore and Bombay. During the depression quite a large number of the mills at Bombay made no profits at all while at Cawnpore most of the mills did make a profit. The following table gives the names of a few mills with their spindleage and loomage which made heavy losses from 1930 to 1936.

#### *Losses from 1930 to 1936*

#### *Spindles — Looms*

E.D. Sasson United Mills Ltd. (5 mills)	250806	6505
Edward Sasson Mills	45412	920
David Mills	81634	1019
Elphinstone	46608	782
Swadeshi Mills	76000	2150
Tata Mills	62368	1800

562828	13176
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On the other hand at Cawnpore the balance sheets of only the following mills are published and these show losses only during the year mentioned against their names. There is no doubt that during the period of acute depression the profits were reduced, but boom and depression in business inevitably follow each other.

	<i>Spindles</i>	<i>Looms</i>	<i>The Year of loss</i>
Elgin Mills	53,000	1,184	1931 (Rs. 87,000)
Muir Mills	88,852	1,624	—
New Victoria Mills Co. Ltd.	88,463	1,615	1930 (year of the re-organis- ation of the mill)

74. A consolidated balance sheet covering eleven mills has been supplied to us by the Employers' Association. This is reproduced as Table XV. The figures have been certified by Messrs. Billimoria & Co., a firm of chartered accountants at Bombay and we have no hesitation in accepting them as correct. But the method of presentation is so lacking in necessary details that we are not prepared to draw any definite conclusions from the statement. We do not, for example, know how much has been debited to depreciation funds and managing agents' commissions and on what basis. Again we should have liked to know on what basis credits were made to the Reserve Funds. We have been given figures of trading profits, but we do not know how they differ from gross or net profits. The only general observation that we can make is that the block accounts show a steady rise and so do the Reserve Funds. These steady increases are the most likely results of increased prosperity.

75. The Special Tariff Board presided over by Sir Alexander Murray which submitted its report in 1935 made a survey of the position of the cotton textile industry in India between 1931 and 1935. They remarked that during this period the expansion of this industry had been general all over the country except in the Bombay Presidency. This also shows that Cawnpore, as compared to Bombay and Ahmedabad, was in a better position even during the days of the economic depression.

76. *Cawnpore and Bombay wage levels compared:* As regards the disparities in the wages prevailing in Cawnpore and other places, particularly Bombay and Ahmedabad which are the leading industrial centres, a pointed reference has been made in the memorandum of the Mazdoor Sabha which we have already noticed in paras 27 to 32. Even allowing for the fact that the figures given in Tables I, II and IV are not the latest and in several cases also liable to error, the broad fact remains that the Cawnpore wage level is far lower than that of Bombay and Ahmedabad. In the following table (No. XVI), an attempt has been made to compare the latest available Bombay figures with the Cawnpore figures of 1937 in respect of 31 categories to which we have confined our detailed examination. The Bombay figures have been taken from the General Wage Census Report of 1934, and are weighted averages as in the case of Cawnpore. Figures of a later period are not available for all categories. Daily wages have been converted into monthly by multiplying by 26 for the sake of comparison. It should however be pointed out that in 1934 the Bombay mill industry was working 10 hours a day

TABLE XV

Number of Returns	Year	Paid-up capital	Total Block Account (A)	Reserve Fund	Trading Profit	Percentage of Trading Profit on Block	Total amount of Dividend declared	Percentage of Dividend paid on Block
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
8	1929	3,25,26,215	4,50,73,998	75,86,000	24,70,129	5.36	15,78,500	3.42
8	1930	2,25,40,515	4,71,66,914	87,58,532	13,82,707	2.98	15,66,000	3.32
8 (B)	1931	3,25,25,330	4,77,41,530	86,78,532	18,16,261	3.80	14,66,690	3.07
8	1932	2,25,25,380	4,86,03,891	89,92,532	(C) 19,60,040	4.03	14,56,533	3.00
8	1933	2,25,25,430	4,96,00,488	92,30,014	11,00,351	2.26	13,05,500	2.63
8	1934	2,11,54,620	5,12,42,309	95,46,222	(C) 28,56,763	5.57	17,83,895	3.48
8	1935	2,11,79,620	5,39,79,181	98,69,387	(C) 17,19,526	3.18	14,37,730	2.66
11	1936	2,27,54,620	5,97,86,860	1,01,83,940	20,01,987	3.38	12,98,565	2.18
		18,77,31,780	40,31,95,171		1,53,16,874		1,18,93,413	

NOTE:

A) Total Block Account does not include amounts written off under Capital Reduction Schemes.

B) Further reduction in Capital due to surrender of shares.

C) Profit on Investments is included in the amount of Trading Profit, as these amounts were used for paying dividend.

1932 1934 1935

Rs. 2,05,908 Rs. 60,316 Rs. 1,36,103

TABLE XVI: Comparative statement of wages of selected categories in Bombay and Cawnpore cotton mills

No.	Name of occupation	Average earning per month of 26 working days (in Rs.)		% increase or decrease of Bombay wages over Cawnpore wages
		Bombay 1934	Cawnpore 1937	
1.	Opener Attendants	21.2	16.03	+ 32
2.	Scutcher Attendants	21.0	15.7	+ 34
3.	Lap Carriers	20.8	16.92	+ 22
4.	Card Machine Tenters	19.6	16.15	+ 22
5.	Fly Gatherers	19.8	17.41	+ 14
6.	Strippers and Grinders	23.8	16.59	+ 43
7.	Drawing Tenters	26.0	28.0	- 7
8.	Slubbing Tenters	29.2	29.07	+ 0.5
9.	Outer Tenters	27.7	25.52	+ 8
10.	Roving Tenters	26.2	21.69	+ 22
11.	Doffers Carding	17.3	11.45	+ 54
12.	Doffers Spinning	—	12.68	—
13.	Siders	22.0	18.84	+ 17
14.	Doubling Tenters	—	17.10	—
15.	Reelers	16.6	12.15	+ 36
16.	Grey Winders (O.T.)	16.2	19.92	- 19
17.	Grey Winders (H.S.)	—	22.76	—
18.	Warpers (O.T.)	44.6	38.05	+ 18
19.	Warpers (H.S.)	—	59.68	—
20.	Warping Creelers	17.85	14.83	+ 20
21.	Front Sizers	68.0	31.8	+ 115
22.	Back Sizers	34.4	20.61	+ 66
23.	Drawers-in	42.5	30.47	+ 38.7
24.	Reachers	22.3	13.65	+ 68.0
25.	Weavers	35.8	37.07	- 7
26.	Folders Machine	—	15.15	—
27.	Folders Hand	21.3	16.58	+ 29
28.	Coolies	—	—	—
29.	Oilmen	25.5	16.07	+ 58
30.	Sweepers Inside	17.4	13.33	+ 32
31.	Sweepers Outside	—	12.44	—

and this factor should be allowed for in making the comparison.

77. The differences thus disclosed are too glaring to escape attention. It is not possible for us to say what part of the difference should be attributed to factors such as greater efficiency, higher cost of living and finer counts in Bombay. Generally speaking, however, it appears to us that these causes cannot explain or justify the whole of the difference. These disparities will be further accentuated as a result of the recommendations contained in the interim report of the Bombay Textile Inquiry Committee which we gather have been accepted by the Bombay millowners. They will push up the general wage level by about 12%.

78. *Rise in wages justifiable:* Relying on such data as we have and which we have indicated we are of the opinion that the industry in Cawnpore is in a strong and healthy position, and it is possible to attempt a reduction in the difference between the Bombay and Cawnpore wage levels. It would, therefore, be justifiable to suggest that a small rise in wages should be given to all the workers engaged in the industry. If our analysis of the situation is at all correct, the comparative position of the industry as between 1929 and 1938, we believe, justifies us to make this call upon the industry.

79. *Our proposals:* Our proposal is that for the purpose of giving increments in wages the workers should be divided into the following five wage groups and given increases as indicated against each:

<i>Wage groups</i>	<i>Increases</i>
I. Between Rs.13 and Rs.19	2½ as. in the rupee, subject to the condition that no one gets more than Rs.21/8.
II. Between Rs.19 and Rs.25	2 as. in the rupee subject to the condition that no one gets more than Rs.27/8.
III. Between Rs.25 and Rs.32/8	1½ as. in the rupee subject to the condition that no one gets more than Rs.35.
IV. Between Rs.32/8 and Rs.40	1 anna in the rupee subject to the condition that no one gets more than Rs.41/8.
V. Between Rs.40 and Rs.59	1/2 anna in the rupee, subject to the condition that no one gets more than Rs.60/8.

80. Further we recommend that all time workers wherever they are on a daily basis should be put on a monthly basis. In 1929 the monthly basis was the usual rule and we do not see why that salutary practice should not be reverted to. The conversion of a monthly rate into a daily one on the basis of a 26-day month not only deprives the workers of the wages during the holidays, but in effect reduces their earnings because it is not often that a mill works for full 26 days.

81. *Effect of our proposals:* On a rough calculation we believe that these proposals will raise the general wage level in Cawnpore by between 10 and 12% and their effect therefore will be to prevent the disparity between Bombay and Cawnpore being further widened in consequence of the recommendations of the Bombay Enquiry Committee (1938). They will leave unimpaired the comparative advantages which Cawnpore enjoys over Bombay:

82. *Relation of cost of living to our wage proposals:* We have to recognise the fact that both the employers as well as the Mazdoor Sabha agree that there has been a reduction in the cost of living as between 1929 and 1937. In the subsequent statements made in the course of evidence there was considerable agreement between the employers and the Mazdoor Sabha on this point. There are, however, certain considerations which we would urge in applying the principle of lower cost of living to the determination of wages. We deal in the succeeding

chapter with the question of the minimum wage which cannot properly be fixed without relation to the cost of living. But no one will dispute the point that the lower paid workers who form such a large proportion of the total number do not get a living wage. To the extent, therefore, that the cost of living dropped during the years of the depression they were able to approximate towards standards compatible with a living wage. The cost of living theory cannot have in reality valid application to those classes of workers whose wages are below a living wage level. Our wage increment proposal will mean a definite betterment in the standard of living of the worker over the 1929 level. Present prices have not caught up to the 1929 point though they show a distinct trend towards a rise.

We have no desire to see the men wedded for all time to a given standard of the past, even if it be that of 1929. A progressively rising standard is desirable. For, eventually this must lead to a general promotion in their proficiency. We could suggest a rise in wages, adjustable to the difference between the cost of living between the two years. We, however, refrain from taking this course. The one reason is given above, namely we do not desire to see the workers fixed to a given level permanently. The other reason is that we expect prices to rise further. Also we must repeat again that we cannot depend too surely on the reliability of the cost of living index supplied.

83. *Bonuses:* Regarding bonuses the employers contended that these are ex-gratia payments and the workers cannot make any claim to them. However, if bonuses have been paid for considerable periods, they increase earnings to that extent, and thereby help workers to reach a particular standard of living. Workers soon become accustomed to such a standard, so that when employers, however justifiably from their point of view, withdraw these bonuses, or effect reduction in the rates, the workers feel it immediately. Obviously, they dislike the idea of a lowering of their standard of living. Our idea is that wherever bonuses are of a monthly character, they should be incorporated with the wages. Wherever the bonuses have been of an annual nature, they should be converted into profit sharing schemes.

84. We have, however, one exception to our general rule in this connection. This is in regard to the bonus given to compensate for the high cost of living, whenever prices tend to go up as compared with some basic year. There should be a sliding scale arrangement in this connection, agreed upon between the employers and the representatives of the Mazdoor Sabha. Given a reliable cost of living index series, which we propose should be maintained by the Labour Office, the adjustment of wages should become almost automatic for a given rise or fall in the index number.

85. *Wage Fixation Board:* In order that this arrangement should function smoothly we propose a Wage Fixation Board. This should be constituted and function somewhat on the lines of the British Trade Boards. It may consist merely of employers' and workers' representatives, with their own Chairman. Or they may have a neutral Chairman, the Commissioner of Labour for instance. Such machinery would prove, we believe, highly useful. Wage troubles are likely

to crop up. The cotton industry is not a static industry. We are anxious to provide all means possible to adjust factors liable to lead to industrial strife. We consider none of greater importance than the machinery for the adjustment of the wages problem.

### CHAPTER III

## MINIMUM WAGE

86. *The principle of the minimum wage:* The principle of the minimum wage has now been accepted as being reasonable, fair and necessary in almost all advanced modern nations. Starting from the British colonies, it spread to England, the Continent and now is found to be on the statute books of both the old and the new world countries. It is not necessary to elaborate either its history or its significance, fascinating though such a task would be in itself. Abundant literature is available on the subject and students may refer to that for further knowledge. The principle of the minimum simply stated is to guarantee to the worker a living wage.

87. *The principle accepted by the Employers' Association, but certain conditions demanded:* We are happy to acknowledge that the employers have accepted the principle of the minimum wage. In the answer to Question No. 12, they say:

The Association see no objection to minimum rate of wages being fixed for factory adult labour, provided that under no circumstances should the standard of minimum rate of wage be so fixed that the textile industry of the United Provinces would be unduly handicapped in competition with the textile industry in other centres. It is not feasible to deal with a minimum wage for one industry without considering the possibilities of a minimum wage for all industries. Moreover, the establishment of a minimum wage would involve taking evidence about whole of India's economic activity and the Central Government's fiscal policy.

It is therefore in its practical application rather than in its intrinsic principle that the employers apprehend several difficulties.

88. *Danger of selecting a single industry:* For instance, it is not without justification that the employers state that it would be unfair to single out any one industry for the imposition of this piece of legislation. It would impose a burden upon it, not borne by other industries. It would be an act of discrimination against it. It would, therefore, lead to the flow of resources away from it, into



other industries, presumably not so worthwhile in themselves. This deflection would be artificial and to that extent may injure the national dividend. Theoretically speaking, this objection against the introduction of the minimum wage principle is correct. Marginal productivity is a guiding principle which cannot safely be abandoned in the gainful employment of the agents of production. Yet a judicious interference may, from the long period point of view, be actually more beneficial than it appears to be from the short period standpoint. It is practically due to such considerations that either protection or subsidy or some other aid is given by the State to particular industries. Such deliberate interference with the economic laws of supply and demand is regarded as necessary and worthwhile from the long range point of view. People in the cotton industry should not find it difficult to grasp the implications of such action.

89. *Desirability of all-India action:* We agree, however, with the employers that it would not be fair to bring about such an action [with] respect to Cawnpore alone. It should be promulgated as an all-India piece of legislation. This is sound in principle. Otherwise, fear of inter-provincial and Indian States competition would emerge as a stern reality in the disposal of Cawnpore products. Already industry is migrating into Indian States in consequence of the progressive labour legislation which is being adopted in the British Provinces in the country. The injury of such geographically localized legislation has to be taken into due consideration. Also the factor of foreign competition cannot be overlooked. The labour costs of production in the Indian cotton industry are phenomenally high per 1,000 spindles or per 100 looms. We, therefore, have to be careful in adding to the burden of this our leading industry in the country. We are, however, confident that our suggestion in this regard will not be burdensome. If anything, it will tone up the industry in Cawnpore.

90. *The standard of living—difficulties of determination:* In fixing a minimum wage, we have necessarily to take the cost of living into consideration. We have to determine the standard. This is not an easy matter. Physiological, social and environmental elements of the problem have all to be carefully examined. Data has to be collected. Family budgets have to be obtained, studied and analysed. The requisite items have to be selected with care, and accurately weighted, quantitatively and qualitatively. All this is work of a high order, requiring patience, precision and understanding of the classes on whose behalf the cost of living is being determined. The family unit itself has to be defined and fixed. In the Indian social system this is not a matter of easy achievement. Traditions and social usages of the people have to be respected and duly appraised.

91. *Wages in other occupations:* Another important factor that has to be considered is the prevailing rates of wages in similar occupations, or the general wage rate in the neighbourhood. In this connection the background of rural conditions and the prevalent wage-rate for the agricultural labourer cannot be kept out of mind, especially when it is recognised that the bulk of the textile mill

workers come from the agricultural classes. Then, the many trades and occupations in the city, including, for instance, wages given to public, Municipal and domestic servants, cannot be overlooked. The manual worker toiling in the street, pushing a handcart, or lifting heavy burdens in the bazaar, has to be kept in mind. All these are considerations that are relevant to the question.

92. *Minimum wage legislation usually applied to minor trades:* There is one consideration, however, of a different nature which has caused us much uncertainty. It is this. We cannot overlook the fact that in most countries, where minimum wage legislation has been introduced, it has been in regard to minor trades and occupations. Major industries, except under special circumstances and considerations, for instance the coal trade in Great Britain, have not been brought under the action of such legislative measures. Big industries have evolved their own guarantees. Labour, through its own organised strength, has secured for itself terms which protect it adequately, including a basic minimum wage. They have not resorted to State assistance in this connection. By their inherent strength, with admirable perseverance, through the process of collective bargaining they have carved out for themselves this protection, with the full recognition and agreement of their employers.

93. *Our view:* If conditions were not abnormal and other factors were equally helpful, as for instance public policy regarding the provision of education, health and other matters, we would be very greatly inclined to leave the large industries, the cotton industry in particular, to settle the question itself. We cannot help feeling that, in the long run, this would be the very best procedure to adopt in the interest of textile labour itself. But, reviewing affairs as a whole, we feel that our proposal for a minimum wage for the cotton industry is desirable. We are impressed with the thought that our proposal will benefit particularly those categories of workers in the cotton industry who are the lowest paid, the least vocal and are probably the least considered even by the workers themselves. The workers who are enjoying differential advantage in wages, for instance the weavers, are apt to forget the coolie, the doffer or the sweeper. Sectional considerations are not unknown in labour or trade union activities. Hence we feel justified in recommending a minimum which we know will help these low-paid categories of workers.

94. *Need of a minimum wage to other grades and occupations in Cawnpore:* There is another aspect of the proposition which weighs with us. While we have confined ourselves exclusively to the cotton mill workers, we were nevertheless styled the Labour Enquiry Committee. We actually received requests from other grades of labour, for instance the depressed class workers, to take up the enquiry of their conditions of work and wages. The scavengers too desired that their wages and conditions of work should be investigated. It is probably true that the cotton operatives, comparatively speaking, are well off. Certain categories amongst the cotton workers, particularly the weavers, are definitely better off, in every way, than low-paid clerks, *muneems*, shop-assistants, and ill-paid Municipal or District Board school-masters and school-

mistresses. It is well to recognise these facts. Other categories of workers, and probably no one more than the general labourer, man and woman, need far greater consideration and protection. But it was impossible, under the circumstances in which we were placed, to undertake such an enquiry, however desirable it may have been in itself. We are glad to note that the labour leaders in Cawnpore are alive to this aspect of the labour question. They are increasingly bending their energies in this direction. We feel that in accepting the minimum wage principle and in prescribing a figure, we shall be able to bear, indirectly at any rate, on the wage rate in other ill-organised and low-paid trades and occupations. We are not very hopeful about the wage rate for the class of the general labourer. His wage is related to the wage rate of the landless agricultural worker in the countryside. It is only when general economic conditions improve, will his wage also increase. The population factor looms large in this consideration. It is inescapable.

95. *Decent standard essential for children—the future generation:* We must state it frankly that we desire to see our workers living a decent and self-respecting life. We wish them to be adequately housed, cleanly clad, and sufficiently fed. We desire their children to be well-nourished, well-cared for, and sufficiently educated, to grow up to be efficient workmen and workwomen, and enlightened and responsible citizens. We realise how stunted, cribbed and confined is their present existence. For instance, even the budget estimate that has been prepared by the Mazdoor Sabha does not include the item of milk. How essential milk is for little children and nursing mothers, and the sick and suffering, is too obvious to require emphasis. For a people who are mostly vegetarian, the need for milk is even greater. Yet this item is not included in the budget estimates either by the workers or by the employers.

96. *Indebtedness:* There is another aspect of the worker's economic situation which has been neglected. It is the fact of his indebtedness. The indebtedness of the workers is proverbial. It is one of the largest single causes of their depressed economic condition. But no item towards interest payment as a cost in the items of expenditure in the workers' budget has been included. For several reasons this exclusion is correct. Yet it is an expenditure that weighs heavily upon the worker. It is not possible for him to escape it, especially if he has had the misfortune to contract that debt from that sturdy fellow, the Kabuli. For he is a money-lender and liquidator combined, thanks to his invincible lathi! But be it recorded to the honour of the worker that he has no intentions of defaulting. Debt repudiation is not in his line. This faithful repayment of debt, interest and compound interest, was a fact which amazed and elicited the admiration of the foreign experts on the Central Banking Enquiry Committee. We cannot analyse here the causes for which a large portion of these debts are incurred. However, it cannot be gainsaid that partly these debts are incurred for meeting the bare needs of life. This is especially true when sickness intervenes, as it must in a sub-tropical province like ours, and when the principal bread-winner is himself sick, and all income stops immediately. He has next to no savings to fall back upon, except perhaps his

wife's few pieces of jewellery, for which again, by the way, we see no item of expenditure entered in the budgets submitted to us. It is unlikely that he will be a member of a Co-operative Society. So incurring of debt becomes a matter of dire necessity. The stark possibility of starvation faces the worker and his family.

97. *The new civilisation:* Workers reduced to such a situation cannot but view with bitterness the entire arrangement of things. Little wonder that pictures of a different type of civilisation which they are informed is a reality, and not a mere Utopian dream, have such an irresistible fascination and attraction for them. If they can bring about such a change, which they are taught they can if they only "will", they are prepared to face untold hardships, even worse, if need be. This situation we are convinced is not a mere creation of our academic imagination. We have been sufficiently long in Cawnpore, in raw personal touch with the workers, to see that this type of mentality has been fostered and engendered amongst them with zeal and tireless energy.

98. *The living wages figure impracticable:* Be this as it may, we are not in a position to recommend a minimum of the magnitude indicated in the Mazdoor Sabha memorandum, i.e., Rs.33-4-10 or even the figure of Rs.25 indicated by its President in the course of his evidence upon this matter. Such a figure would require, definitely, all-India deliberation, and much comprehensive calculation of a number of factors. Also we may indicate that a number of very powerful, prosperous and wealthy countries, like the United States, England or Japan, have not fixed such minimum wage exclusively on the basis of cost of living. The principle of what the industry can reasonably be expected to bear, is the method employed in fixing the figure. We ourselves therefore cannot go beyond this method. Nearer home, we find that the Bombay Committee (Interim Report, 1937-38) have fixed Rs.15-8-0 as the upper limit for the lowest paid categories of workers in the cotton industry. We, therefore, suggest Rs.15 as the minimum. We suggest this figure as the minimum in the cotton and woollen industry in Cawnpore. No adult male worker should receive less than this amount reckoned either on a daily or monthly basis, except those who cannot reach the minimum standard of efficiency on account of old age or infirmity.

99. *Wage fixation machinery relating to the minimum cost of living:* It is necessary for us to point out that to safeguard the value of our minimum wage rate per month, there will have to be the apparatus of the cost of living index number. For it is in terms of real wages that we wish to relate the money wages of the workers. The sliding scale system will have to be recognised and operated upon. For this purpose mutual co-operation between the employers and workers will have to be brought into play. The wage fixation machinery we have suggested elsewhere will have to function in connection with this matter also.

100. *Periodical revision of the minimum:* We desire to point out that the minimum we suggest is not to be regarded as the minimum for all time. Examination of the question, seven-yearly or ten-yearly, may warrant revision of the minimum. Workers are entitled to an increasing share in the good things of life. Less disparity is the only sure guarantee of civic security.

## CHAPTER IV

## STANDARDISATION OF WAGES

101. *Existing disparities in allocation of work and wages:* We have been struck by the wide disparities both in regard to the nature of work entrusted to an operative having the same occupational designation and his earnings in the different mills. The various mill managements have supplied us with statements of average earnings of the workers in some of the principal occupations in their mills. They are not strictly comparable in the absence of detailed information regarding the allocation of work. But they conclusively establish the facts that no attempt has hitherto been made to fix any wage standards for the various occupations, and that the existing disparities cannot be explained on any rational basis. In the following table the data supplied by the various mills have been tabulated for four important occupations in which a large number of operatives are engaged.

*Frequency table showing the range of variation in the earnings of operatives in four occupations in cotton mills in Cawnpore in 1937*

Average earnings per month of 26 working days	Number of mills in which the average earnings are as per column (1)			
	(a) Roving Tenters	(b) Ring Siders	(c) Grey Winders Old Type	(d) Two- loom Weavers
Below Rs. 15	1	2	2	—
Between Rs. 15 to 17	—	1	1	—
Between Rs. 17 to 19	1	2	1	—
Between Rs. 19 to 21	3	4	2	—
Between Rs. 21 to 23	1	1	—	1
Between Rs. 23 to 25	2	1	2	0
Between Rs. 25 to 27	2	—	—	1
Between Rs. 27 to 29	—	—	1	—
Between Rs. 29 to 31	—	—	—	—
Between Rs. 31 to 33	—	—	—	—
Between Rs. 33 to 35	—	—	—	1
Between Rs. 35 to 37	—	—	—	3
Between Rs. 37 to 39	1	—	—	3
Between Rs. 39 to 41	—	—	—	1
Between Rs. 41 to 43	—	—	—	—

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Variation from	Variation from	Variation from	Variation from
Rs. 13/15/- to	Rs. 12/6/- to	Rs. 10/5/- to	Rs. 22/14/- to
Rs. 37/2/8	Rs. 23/10/-	Rs. 27/-/6	Rs. 39/12/-

102. *Necessity for a uniform system of wage determination:* It will be noticed that the variations are of a magnitude which cannot be overlooked. We can

understand that there are bound to be certain variations in earnings between the workers in the same occupations from mill to mill on account of variations in type of and conditions of machinery, material, working conditions, character of goods and the efficiency of workers. But the disparities disclosed are too big to be accounted for by all these reasons. They can only be due to the lack of uniformity in the system prevailing in the various mills for determination of wages. In our opinion, such wide disparities in wages paid to workers in similar occupations are sources of discontent and endanger peace in industry. We would therefore urge on the Employers' Association the immediate need of their carefully examining the wages for different occupations in the different mills and evolving a uniform system of wage determination suitable for the textile industry of Cawnpore.

103. *Standard designations for various occupations:* Such a work would necessarily involve the preliminary work of fixing standard names for various occupations. What we find at present is that the workers designated by the same name have different duties in different mills. It is obvious that before any uniform system of wage determination can be evolved for the industry as a whole, the nomenclatures for various occupations must first be standardised. The drawing up of standard designations must therefore be taken up as soon as possible. It is quite probable that the attempt to do so may arouse the suspicion of the workers, particularly when some readjustment of duties is involved. We therefore consider that the Employers' Association will be well advised to consult and enlist the co-operation of the Government Textile Expert and the representatives of labour before they finally draw up a list. We suggest that they should appoint a technical committee for this purpose.

104. *Standardisation of wage rates:* As regards the actual standardisation of wage rates, we are aware that there are numerous difficulties. But we find that a standardisation scheme was prepared by the Bombay Millowners' Association in June 1928 vide Appendix VIII on pages 232 to 235 of the Report of the Bombay Strike Enquiry Committee, Vol. I. This scheme was discussed by that Committee and their recommendations with regard to it are contained in para 197 on page 94 of the report. We understand, however, that the Bombay Millowners Association has adopted a standard wage list for time rate occupations only. It may not be possible immediately to lay down standard rates providing for automatic adjustments for every conceivable variety of work, but we are inclined to believe that progress in certain directions is certainly possible. Representatives of some of the mills examined by us admitted the desirability of the levelling up of wages.

105. So far as the time-workers are concerned, we do not think that there should be any insuperable difficulty. Once standard designations for the various classes of time-workers and the duties attaching to those designations have been determined it should be possible to lay down standard rates of their wages. In the case of the piece-rate workers, the system to be evolved will have to allow for variations in production arising out of maladjustment of speed, variations in

quality of material and working conditions. The view of the Employers' Association is that the fixing up of standard rates for piece-rate workers is too technical to be practicable. But the present system (if it can be called a system at all), according to which the rates for piece-workers are so adjusted as to limit the maximum earnings of the operative, is, in our opinion, certainly wrong. Though the employers' representatives denied the application of any such limit it was clear from the evidence that a limit arbitrarily fixed is in operation. The rates must be so fixed that an average worker should be enabled to earn an average earning for a particular occupation at a reasonable standard of efficiency, while no arbitrary limit should be imposed on his earnings which result from his greater efficiency. The system should be so designed that it encourages him to increase his efficiency and earn a higher wage. One of the mills did evolve a system of automatic adjustment in wages in their spinning department which made allowances for variations in quality of output due to changes in twist inserted in yarn and changes in working conditions. We consider this to be a commendable effort, but we were told that the workers were opposed to it as they did not understand its principles and the management had therefore decided to revert to the old system which provides no stimulus for increased efficiency or adjustments for changes in quality, etc. On a personal enquiry of the case from some of the workers of the mill we found, however, that their dislike was not based so much on their inability to understand the system, but was really due to the basic rates being fixed at such a low level that the actual average earnings fell short of the earnings of workers on the old system. The representatives of the Mazdoor Sabha have urged the desirability of introducing a system of wage determination for piece workers which would take variable factors of work into consideration. While, as we have said above, we realise the technical difficulties involved, we do not regard them as insuperable. Even if a uniform rates list cannot be laid down for the industry as a whole immediately, standard rates can certainly be laid down to start with by individual mills for themselves which will provide for automatic adjustment on the introduction of new varieties. Variable factors from mill to mill may be many and of considerable diversity, but the limits of variations in a given mill can be laid down with sufficient precision.

106. *Standardisation of wages:* It has been suggested to us that, instead of considering the determination of standard rates, we should aim at the determination of standard wages. That is to say, the actual earning of an operative in the various mills should be compared occupation by occupation and where the earning in a certain mill is below the average of the industry as a whole an effort should be made to pull up the average of that mill by inducing it to enhance either its rates or its efficiency. This is no doubt possible and may have the result of increasing the earnings of the under-paid operatives. But mere standardisation of wages (as distinguished from rates) cannot provide the stimulus which is necessary for a workman to increase his efficiency. The only sound method, in our opinion, is to standardise the rates which will enable an operative to earn according to his efficiency without any arbitrary limitations.

## CHAPTER V

## RATIONALISATION

107. *What is rationalisation?* The movement towards rationalisation has been one of the most important features of industry throughout the world in the post-war period. According to the International Labour Office, Geneva, rationalisation means "the methods of technique and of organisation designed to secure the minimum waste of either effort or material. It includes the scientific organisation of labour, standardisation both of material and of products, simplification of processes and improvements in the system of transport and marketing." The International Economic Conference, which met at Geneva in May 1927, passed a number of resolutions on the subject of which, for our purpose, the following is important:

"The Conference considers that one of the principal means of increasing output, improving conditions of labour and reducing costs of production is to be found in the rational organisation of production and distribution. The Conference considers that such rationalisation aims simultaneously:

- (1) at securing the maximum efficiency of labour with the minimum of effort;
- (2) at facilitating by a reduction in the variety of patterns (where such variety offers no obvious advantage), the design, manufacture, use and replacement of standardised parts;
- (3) at avoiding waste of raw materials and power;
- (4) at simplifying the distribution of goods; and
- (5) at avoiding in distribution unnecessary transport, burdensome financial charges and the useless interposition of middlemen.

Its judicious and constant application is calculated to secure

- (1) to the community, greater stability and a higher standard in the conditions of life;
- (2) to the consumer, lower prices and goods more carefully adapted to general requirements; and
- (3) to the various classes of producers, higher and steadier remuneration to be equitably distributed among them.

It must be applied with the care which is necessary in order, while at the same time continuing the process of rationalisation, not to injure the legitimate interests of the workers and suitable measures should be provided for cases where during the first stage of its realisation it may result in loss of employment or more arduous work.

It requires further, as far as regards the organisation of labour in the strict



sense of the term, the co-operation of the employees and the assistance of trade and industrial organisations and of scientific and technical experts."

108. It will therefore be seen that rationalisation covers every aspect of industry, on the manufacturing, the selling and the distribution sides. In this enquiry we are, however, concerned primarily with the human factor, that is to say, the effect on the worker of methods designed to secure the efficiency of labour and of the machines on which he works.

109. *Rationalisation in Cawnpore textile industry:* In this sense schemes of rationalisation include (1) changes in the plant, (2) changes in the character of production, and (3) intensification, that is asking one operative to tend more machines. As far as we could gather from the statements and the oral evidence produced before us, there is enough evidence to show that there has been a fair amount of rationalisation in various mills at Cawnpore. Some of them have introduced highdraft systems in ring spinning, self-stripping devices on cards, high speed winding and warping machines in their preparatory processes. In the case of a few mills new humidification plants have been installed and some mills have gone in for repairs and adjustments on a large scale; replacement of parts; putting up of new and up-to-date machinery; and improved methods of drive. The character of production has also altered in the case of some mills, and there appears to be a tendency towards better mixings. Rationalisation in the sense of intensification is to be found only in two or three mills on any extensive scale, and only rarely has intensification been introduced in complete sections.

110. *Its effect on workers' earnings:* All these changes must result in greater efficiency both of the machine and of the operative. It is difficult to evaluate the increase in the efficiency of the operatives in terms of money, or to arrive at any figure which could show how the average production of the worker has risen because of the introduction of better plant, better mixings and improved working conditions. Speaking generally, we find, however, that the results of rationalisation have not been reflected in the earnings of the operatives to the extent that one might have expected. This is specially true in the case of the spinning department and other departments where the operatives are paid by time and not by piece. While in some cases the piece workers could derive the benefit of rationalisation by way of higher wages on increased production, we have noticed a definite tendency on the part of the employers to adjust the piece rates in such a way as to limit their maximum earnings. The time worker has not only not obtained an increase in the wage due to intensification, but his work also has increased. This point is, however, strenuously disputed by the employers. They maintain that with better grades of cotton, more suitable and careful mixing, superior machinery, and better conditioning within the Departments work is much easier. There are fewer breakages and fewer stoppages, and less running about to do. We must bear testimony to this fact that whenever conditioning plants have been installed, and modern methods adopted, to our untrained observation there seemed to be less strain on the workers, especially in the spinning sections of the industry. Some of the Departments in some of these

mills appeared to us to resemble University Laboratories, so clean and orderly were they in contrast with those mills where work is still carried on in the old ways. We have no doubt whatsoever that work in these mills is far more strenuous and exacting than in the newly reconditioned mills. An experienced, go-ahead and sympathetic employer affirmed before us that these modern methods of production in the textile industry actually meant less exertion, because of layout of frames and other factors, in spite of the fact that the men were called upon to look after more spindles than before.

111. *Views of Employers' Association:* The views of the Employers' Association on this question of rationalisation are summarised in the following quotation from their memorandum:

The Association desire to state that rationalisation and intensification as known in other centres in India has not been introduced into Cawnpore as yet, but the Employers' Association appreciate their tardiness in this direction since they fully realise that rationalisation and intensification were today a world-wide policy. Therefore if the textile industry of Cawnpore is to survive, it must be placed in a position to compete with other centres both indigenous and foreign and this can only be achieved by introducing rationalisation and intensification.

The Association further desire to stress that schemes of rationalisation and intensification assist both the employer and the employee. The former is able to retain his market and so continue to give employment to the latter. Such schemes increase the earnings of the operatives and therefore raise their standard of living and comfort. Health and efficiency are not impaired and, as there is no appreciable difference in the productive efficiency, it would indicate that it is well within the capacity of the operatives to look after more machines than at present.

112. *View of the Mazdoor Sabha:* The Mazdoor Sabha in their memorandum state:

We accept the principle of rationalisation as a necessary factor in social and economic progress. But it is at the same time necessary to safeguard the interest of labour.

To sum up, rationalisation should be permitted only if all additional profits resulting from intensification after deducting interest on additional investment and depreciation charges is paid to the workers, there is no throwing out of employment of the present workers in the Mill, additional facilities for training and rest are provided, and the whole scheme is subject to the approval of the representatives of the workers' organisation.

113. *Our view:* It will be observed that even the Mazdoor Sabha accept the principle of rationalisation, and the conclusion emerges that a wider adoption of

rationalisation schemes or intensification and efficiency schemes as known in the local and other textile centres, is desirable. In fact, it is inevitable if the industry at Cawnpore is to maintain its present rate of progress. We welcome the tendency towards rationalisation mentioned in a previous paragraph. It is essential, in the face of world competition that Indian industry, of which textiles is the premier industry, should employ up-to-date methods. Economy and efficiency cannot otherwise be secured. Constant and comprehensive vigilance and adaptation is necessary. Exploitation not of the worker, but of material and machinery should be the key-note of our employers. One important employer, we are glad to note, in the course of his evidence stated that his main concern was to exploit his machines rather than his men. If this spirit became general, the suspicion against intensification and rationalisation would be very greatly diminished.

114. We note that Japan within a period of thirty years, from the first establishment of a spinning concern, has risen to the third position as a cotton manufacturing country in the world. She has adopted intensification and rationalisation wholeheartedly. But it is on all sides. It is not merely confined to labour. From the buying of cotton to its mixing and final sales of the woven fabrics, every single aspect of the business including finance, management and control is thoroughly rationalised.

115. Whatever the reasons, we have to admit the undeniable fact of Japanese rationalisation schemes that gives them high efficiency and low operating costs. This is in spite of the fact that individual Japanese wages are higher than the Indian wages, especially when we take into consideration the welfare costs that Japanese employers incur on behalf of their workers. A cotton authority reckons these costs to be about 6d. to 7d. per worker, per day, on the average. Due to all these causes we find there are for every 1,000 spindles 6.1 operatives in Japan as against 15 in India, or, to put it in another way, an operative in India will look after one side of a spinning frame whereas in Japan a girl will be minding three sides. As for weaving, the girl weaver in Japan looks after 6 looms while our weaver minds about two. As for the famous Japanese Toyoda automatic looms, an operative will look after 50 such looms with 95 to 96 per cent efficiency. The weekly wages per worker in yens, in 1932, in Japan, for 20s counts yarn, was 5.8, as against 9.07 in India. The weekly wage-bill per 1,000 spindles in Japan was 35.3 yen, and in India 136.1 yen. Thus, clearly, intensification and rationalisation are indicated if the Indian cotton industry is to withstand foreign competition at all. We have the great advantage over Japan in this that while Japan does not grow a single bale of cotton within her Islands, we grow it at our mills' doors, so to speak. More than half of our cotton crop has to find markets abroad. Also while Japan has to seek for markets abroad, we have the buyers within our own borders. The position is therefore both humiliating and tragic at the one and the same time.

116. *Conditions preliminary to rationalisation:* Our advocacy of rationalisation is, however, conditioned by several considerations. As urged by the Mazdoor Sabha, the interests of labour should be safeguarded in certain respects before rationalisation schemes are introduced. We believe the fulfilment

close collaboration with the representatives of labour in order to remove likely misgivings. As regards the actual conditions under which efficiency schemes may be introduced it may be pointed out that intensification generally comes into play when new machinery is introduced or the existing machines are replaced or realigned. As two of the mills in Cawnpore where such schemes are already in progress to any appreciable degrees pointed out, there should be better mixings of cotton processed. There must also be suitable working conditions inside the sheds, such as controlled humidity, so that the extra work does not result in an avoidable increase of fatigue on the part of the workers. A careful examination should be made of these and similar considerations and it should be possible to lay down what set of conditions should be fulfilled for the various types of rationalisation schemes.

119. *Unemployment due to rationalisation:* We now come to the question of unemployment that may result from the introduction of rationalisation. Rationalisation schemes should be so programmed that as far as possible all the workers that may be thrown out of employment are absorbed in either day or night shifts in their own mills. One prominent employer while giving evidence before us stated that rationalisation in his mill if freely allowed could proceed side by side with expansion, and, if assured of peace, he could guarantee that all workers discharged as a result of rationalisation would be re-employed. We are ourselves of the opinion that rationalisation in Cawnpore would enable the industry to expand and the resulting unemployment would be temporary and, in any case, not of any great magnitude. When, however, absorption is not possible we would recommend that the workers who have put in two years or more of service be paid an unemployment benefit of a fortnight's wages for every year of service to enable them to return to their villages and to assist them to tide over the period till they may secure some other employment. Further, the names of such workers must be on the waiting list of the mill and they should receive preference over other workers at the time of recruiting at a future date. Such an arrangement would allay any misgivings on the part of labour regarding efficiency schemes and promote the chance of their success to the advantage both of the employers and the employed.

## CHAPTER VI

### SHIFTS

120. *Shift system in Cawnpore:* There are four systems of shifts prevailing in the Textile Mills at Cawnpore. They may be called (1) the Single Shift System, (2) the Double Shift System, (3) the Overlapping Shift System and (4) the Multiple Shift System.

121. Only a few mills have the single shift system. The work is carried on

128. There is yet another good reason why the overlapping and multiple system should be condemned. They make supervision extremely difficult. They make it possible for unscrupulous employers to break the provisions of the Factories Act relating to hours of work with impunity. The Chief Inspector of Factories in his last annual report noticed the increasing tendency to adopt overlapping shifts, and commented upon it adversely. He said, "It is very difficult and in some cases practically impossible effectively to check periods of employment and detect irregularities." In giving evidence before us also the Offg. Chief Inspector of Factories was clear that the overlapping and the multiple shift systems were not easy to supervise. He declared himself definitely in favour of the straight shift system. We attach much value to his evidence. For the same reason the Royal Commission on Labour appointed in 1929 disapproved of these systems.

129. From the point of view of the workers, a larger spread-over will naturally be more inconvenient, in spite of longer intervals, than a shorter one. Except in those few cases where his house is within a reasonable distance from the mill, he has to remain loitering about the premises and waste his time which he could better employ away from the scene of his work. Whatever the interval, it cannot be utilised for proper rest inside the mill, for no mill in Cawnpore has adequate accommodation or satisfactory rest arrangements. The rest interval so spent within the mills cannot be recuperative as it is intended to be. Tired limbs and bodies remain unrefreshed. This process cumulatively has bad effects. Also in so far as the workers cannot get back home, their prolonged absence from the family cannot be healthy. Everything that can be suggested to make family life normal and natural should be considered with great care.

130. *Our opinion of the various systems:* For all these reasons we are forced to the conclusion that overlapping and multiple systems should be abandoned. As we have said above, only a few mills resort to them and we do not see why they should not fall into line with the rest. There may be some force in the contention that seasonal changes in the products of the textile mills tend to throw the various units out of balance and differing shifts might have to be adopted in different departments in order to keep the successive departments fully occupied. But we have found that the better managed mills are always more evenly balanced than those not so well managed, and the great majority of mills in Cawnpore actually do not find it necessary to resort to complicated systems. One or two employers giving evidence before us expressed a definite dislike for them, and we agree with their views.

131. *Inevitability of night work:* As for night work in general, while we cannot conceal our dislike of it, we cannot go so far as to recommend its discontinuance. Night work unquestionably involves greater strain than day work, except during the hottest months of the year, when it was suggested by some employers that the men preferred to work in the cool of the night. It is inconvenient and if enforced for long periods, must prove prejudicial to health. Some workers in Cawnpore have to do continuous night work; that is to say, they

bribery and corruption. The existence of these evils has been acknowledged even by the Employers' Association. In their memorandum they say, "It is the Association's view that all members can and do endeavour to combat bribery and corruption, and they cannot, nor can they be expected to, eradicate a system which appears to be the accepted idea of obtaining, or continuing in, employment."

135. We are convinced that as long as bribery and corruption remain a feature of our labour situation, we can never attain that high degree of industrial efficiency reached in other countries, intensification and rationalisation notwithstanding. It is a deadly cancer which will destroy our industrial enterprise. It requires the combined efforts of employers and workers to eradicate it. Happily we find that both the employers and the Trade Union leaders are fully alive to the necessity of dealing with this evil. Its continuance, unlike the quality of mercy, corrupts him who gives and him who receives. It injures the moral stuff which is, after all is said and done, the ingredient that builds up the quality and dignity of the workman and also his efficiency.

136. *Reasons therefor:* The main reason for this state of affairs is to be found in the employment of the mistries for the recruitment of labour. One witness who has been associated with the textile industry for over twenty-five years and to whose opinion we attach great weight described the mistry system of recruitment as a "baneful" one. A mistry is really a fitter and his job should be to keep the machines in order and supervise the operatives working thereon. He should have no concern with the obtaining of labour. This important work, the mishandling of which has been and is bound to be a source of friction and irritation, must be undertaken directly by an officer who is not of a lower standing than the departmental head. It is not enough, as we have found in the case of some mills, that he merely supervises the recruitment. If mistries are called upon to advise and assist him, they are apt to become *de facto* recruiters. We have found that even where the new appointments have ultimately to be approved by the departmental manager, the preliminary selection of candidates, who are presented for interview and test, is made by the mistries. In other words, they are associated with the process of recruitment at a stage which is most susceptible to corruption. We consider it essential that there should be complete dissociation of mistries from recruitment.

137. We are glad that the Employers' Association have recently started the experiment, recommended by the Royal Commission on Labour, of securing labour through a special Labour Officer of their own. We cannot too strongly endorse the Commission's view that "integrity, personality, energy, the gift of understanding individuals and linguistic facility are the main qualities required" in such a Labour Officer. We agree, too, that it should be among his functions to ensure that no worker is discharged without adequate cause. We should draw the attention of both the Government and the employers to the further remark of the Commission that where a trade union is in existence, its co-operation should be sought in stamping out bribery.

138. *The best among the existing systems:* On the whole, the most satisfactory system now in force in Cawnpore appears to us to be that adopted by one of the mills. Its main features may be briefly described. The great majority of appointments are made on written applications. All applications are filed on a waiting list. When a vacancy occurs on the substitute list, a selection is made from the waiting list directly by the manager of the department concerned, and the selected candidate is sent for a medical examination. If the medical report is satisfactory, the candidate is made a substitute and issued a brass disc bearing a number. Each department has a recognised quota of substitutes, and all substitutes are supposed to present themselves at the mill each day and their attendance is recorded. When a permanent worker absents himself, a substitute is offered the vacancy and those substitutes who are not required leave the mill premises. When a permanent vacancy occurs, it is filled by the substitute with the longest service, as far as possible. On leaving the substitute list, the worker returns his substitute disc and is issued another disc bearing his departmental number.

139. *Labour Exchange:* Even this system, it was admitted, is not completely free from corruption. The trouble seems to us to lie at the first stage, namely, the preliminary enrolment in the waiting list. To overcome it, we strongly recommend the establishment of a Labour Exchange. Both the employers and the workers have advocated it. We believe that if vacancies on the substitute list are filled by reference to the Labour Exchange, a very important step will have been taken towards the elimination of bribery and corruption associated with recruitment.

140. *Control of Labour Exchange:* In the opinion of the employers the Labour Exchange should be an unofficial body. In the conditions obtaining at present in Cawnpore, we cannot accept this view. If there had been wholehearted co-operation between the employers and a workers' organisation, that factor in itself would have gone a long way towards removing corruption and other evils, but until such relations are firmly established, we think that the Labour Exchange should be under the supervision of, and controlled by, Government. Attached to it there should be a recruiting officer, with whom skilled and semi-skilled workers in search of employment should register themselves and whose main function it will be to provide employment to the applicants on demand from factories. It is perhaps needless to add that between the Government's Recruiting Officer, the Labour Officer of the Employers' Association and the Central Executive of the Workers' Union, there should be frequent contact and close liaison.

141. *Factors contributing to efficiency of labour force:* Before we conclude our remarks about the question of recruitment, we wish to invite attention to certain factors which must have a direct bearing on the efficiency of the workers. We shall have to say a good deal about this matter in other chapters dealing with the problems of housing, medical facilities and welfare work. But at this stage we would confine our observations to three main factors in the matter of the

recruitment of labour.

142. *Physical fitness:* One is the question of physical fitness. Particularly in all the preparatory processes and in spinning, we noticed a considerable number of persons with weak physique, bad teeth, and defective eye-sight. From examination of the registers kept by several of the mills in their mill dispensaries—which, by the way, are rendering commendable services to the workmen and their relatives under the care of qualified and devoted doctors, dispensers and nurses, and are not merely administering doses of “iodine” as deposed to by one of the witnesses—we find that there is a general prevalence of alimentary and skin diseases. It is obvious that physically a “C” class labour force cannot be an asset to industry. We therefore consider that no recruitment should be made without a preliminary medical examination. Further, in our opinion, there should be a periodical medical examination of all the permanent workers. In this examination special attention should be given to eyes, teeth, skin and pulmonary troubles. In the periodical reports of mortality in India’s urban areas issued by the Government of India, Cawnpore occupies an unenviably high place. A feature which inevitably attracts attention in the detailed statistics is the regrettably high incidence of what in general are called “respiratory diseases”. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that tuberculosis claims an increasingly large number of victims. Another matter which, in our opinion, should receive particular attention is venereal disease. As the Royal Commission on Labour pointed out in its report, Cawnpore is prominent among the industrial centres in India where the sex disparity is striking. Investigations in regard to these diseases seem to us urgently called for, both in the interests of the general health of Cawnpore and, in particular, of the working class population of the city. The trouble and extra cost will be amply rewarded, we are confident, in a healthier and more satisfactory labour force. It is essential for a comprehensive tackling of the problems enumerated above that there should be a co-ordination of the activities and a pooling of the resources of the Government, the Municipal Board and the employers.

143. *Educational qualifications:* The second point to which we would draw attention is the necessity of some kind of educational test in the recruitment, particularly of child and adolescent labour. For adult labour such a requirement would obviously be Utopian. It is desirable in making permanent selections to give preference to such adolescents as satisfy the required educational test—simple reading and writing and arithmetic—the three R’s. Mental exertion is always good, and at this stage particularly desirable. It will impart intellectual alertness and promote efficiency, which are both essential features for industrial expansion under modern conditions. We are certain that such a demand upon our young labour force will not be resented. In fact, if facilities for reading and writing are provided, through municipal schools or other agencies, the response, we are sure, will be keen and full-blooded. A literate labour force, it can hardly be denied, will contribute to the efficient conduct of industry.

144. *Technical training:* The third matter to which we would call particular



attention is the question of technical training of the operatives. While, undoubtedly, experience in the mills themselves is the best teacher, yet we are certain that instruction in a technical institution would yield good results. A preliminary training, or subsequent part-time course of instruction, should be required from workers seeking permanency. It was brought to our notice by Mr. Murthy, our Technical Adviser, that a certain number of his students have found employment in some of the mills. Active efforts, it seems to us, should be made by the Government to expand the possibilities of such absorption of trained young men far beyond the present rate. We can see great advantage in recruiting educated men of this type, some of whom, at any rate, are bound to possess the requisite qualifications, both moral and technical, for leadership to replace the present mistry type. This is a point which in the long run will so vitally affect the foundations upon which the industrial system in India has been reared that we trust that the Government will recognise the early necessity for regarding the Textile Institute at Cawnpore as a nursery for all but the workers of the unskilled type. We strongly urge the addition of continuation and night classes to the Central Textile Institute, Cawnpore.

145. *Causes of the lower efficiency of the Indian workers:* In the course of our enquiry we were frequently reminded of the greater efficiency of the cotton operatives in Lancashire and Japan. We were also pointedly informed that they were mostly girls. Our workers, who are mostly men, were shown up in contrast as being lethargic, unambitious and inefficient. But even assuming the description to be correct, the main responsibility for the admittedly lower efficiency of our operatives must be borne, we fear, by the state and the employer rather than by the worker himself. What steps has the state, the municipality or the employer so far taken in removing illiteracy or in imparting technical training? In Japan technical schools abound and lead through a chain of institutions right up to the polytechniques and the universities. Where again are the well-planned and well-conducted welfare schemes which are so common a feature of the Japanese cotton textile industry? We make no excuse for the worker's individual and personal lack of effort. Nor do we stand for those aspects of the social system which are unhelpful. But today the worker is the helpless victim of circumstances beyond his control, and we would invite attention to forces that have not been brought into play for increasing his efficiency. More positive and energetic steps will have to be adopted if we wish to put a stop to this ceaseless cry of the inefficiency of the Indian workman. Unaided he can do little for himself. He must be helped. We hope to indicate, in other parts of the Report, ways by which this may be done.

146. *Terms of employment:* Having discussed the methods of recruitment, we may make a few observations as to the terms of engagement. We are glad to note from the memorandum of the Employers' Association that it is considering the question of establishing a standard form of recruitment. When this is considered the Association will, no doubt, also turn its attention to the question of laying down a uniform set of rules for all mills governing the terms of employment. Not

all mills have, at present, any written rules on the subject. We have two comments to offer on the rules that have been presented to us. One or two mills prohibit their employees from being members of any labour organisation. It is extremely surprising, to put it mildly, that any employer should place such a ban on the right of association of the workers. Trade unionism has come to stay in India, and we are convinced that it is as much in the interests of the employers as of the workers that this fact should be recognised without qualification. We deal with this question in greater detail in another part of the report. But it is most essential in the interest of industrial peace that the employers should make it clear, both in their terms of engagement of labour and in actual practice, that active membership of a trade union will not stand in the way of a worker, either in regard to recruitment or the improvement of his prospects.

147. *Display of wage rates:* Another matter which seems to us to deserve the immediate attention of the Government is in regard to the rules made under the Payment of Wages Act. The display of wage rates on the notice board by all mills would minimise the possibilities of misunderstanding on the part of the workers. In the course of our enquiry we found no serious objection from the employers to the adoption of this course. But it was pointed out to us, by at least two witnesses, that this is not obligatory in the United Provinces under the Payment of Wages Act. We would therefore suggest the inclusion of such a provision by a suitable amendment of the rules under the Act.

148. *Wage cards:* It may be convenient here to refer to another suggestion made by the Mazdoor Sabha that every worker should be provided with a wage card at the end of each wage period. This card should indicate both the amount of his wage and the rate or rates on which the calculation has been based. This suggestion would remove a possible cause of misunderstanding and has our support.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PUNISHMENTS

149. *Circumvention of the Payment of Wages Act:* One of the primary objects of the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, was to regulate the scale of deductions from workers' wages either on account of fines or other causes. We found that the actual result in Cawnpore has been an almost complete abolition of fines and other deductions imposed as punishments, followed in some mills by the adoption of various devices which deliberately or otherwise have the effect of circumventing the law.

150. *Forced leave:* It seems to have become a more or less general practice in

Cawnpore to send a worker, guilty of negligence or some other offence which in the pre-Act days would have merited a fine, on what is euphemistically described as forced leave: that is to say, he is asked to stay away from work for a certain period which may be as long as a week or ten days or even more, at the discretion of the employer. One witness referred to it as tantamount to fining and expressed the opinion that it was an illegal practice. Its effect is certainly to curtail a worker's earnings by a proportion which in several instances has far exceeded the maximum for fines laid down in the Act. This practice is, therefore, to be strongly deprecated; and we would suggest to Government that legal opinion should be obtained without delay on the matter. If Government are advised that it is not an illegal practice, we recommend that steps should be taken for amending the Payment of Wages Act suitably so as to render it illegal.

151. *Playing off*: While on the subject of forced leave or suspension, we may refer to what is called "playing off" in the textile industry. Owing to maladjustments in the work of various departments, it may sometimes happen that the volume of work in one or more departments falls below the normal. Under such circumstances all the workers in those departments cannot be kept fully employed, and the necessity arises to "play off" some of them for brief periods. This playing off is not a form of punishment, but results from a temporary reduction in work. Our proposals relating to forced leave would not apply to a genuine case of playing off, though in view of the ingenious practices adopted in some of the mills for circumventing the Payment of Wages Act, we think a word of caution is called for in this respect. Even as regards genuine playing off for trade reasons some restrictions are necessary. Where the playing off is a species of "short time" and involves merely the giving of less work to an operative than he would normally have, no limitation is ordinarily called for; but where it means complete cessation of work for him, a maximum limit should be imposed, and if the period exceeds that limit, he should be duly compensated. The question has been discussed at length in the Fawcett Committee Report at pages 33 to 36. That Committee considered that playing off should be limited to two days at a time. This limit may, in our opinion, be accepted in Cawnpore subject to the further limitation that the total period for playing off in a year should not exceed twelve days. We would have no objection to a revision of this limit by mutual agreement between the employers and the workers, but if it is exceeded we consider it would be fair to give a worker 50% of the normal wages for each extra day over the maximum.

152. *Differential rates of payment*: We found another practice in mills under one employer which we have even less hesitation in regarding as a gross violation of the Payment of Wages Act. Three differential rates of payment have been introduced for the same work, one for "good quality", another for "indifferent quality" and a third one for "poor quality". The good quality rate is the pre-Act rate, while the other two are reduced so as to cover possibly more than what the former fines would have yielded. The wages of the workers are undetermined and remain indeterminate until the end of the wage period when the employer pays at

one of the three rates, according to his judgment of the work. This, in our opinion, is obviously a most objectionable method of evading the provision of the Payment of Wages Act which limits fines and deductions to half an anna per rupee of the wages earned. Our attention was drawn to a circular issued by the Chief Inspector of Factories in Bombay (dated 27th November 1937) to factory managers in the Presidency declaring such a practice to be against the law. We would suggest immediate action on the same lines in the U.P.

153. *Dismissals:* We now come to the question of dismissals which is of paramount importance, particularly in the present tense atmosphere of Cawnpore. Though it is true that five cases of alleged victimisation by the employers were referred to a judge in the month of November 1937, and his judgment unreservedly supported the action of the employers concerned, it is necessary to bear in mind that the workers attach the greatest importance to security of service. If one examines the history of industrial disputes in India, it will be found that the major cause for several of them was the extreme discontent caused by victimisation, direct or indirect. The Mazdoor Sabha does not question the right of the employers to dismiss a worker for a sufficient cause, but the criticism is that active members of the Mazdoor Sabha or of the Mill Committees are dismissed on some pretext or the other which would not have led to dismissal in the case of other workers. On the other hand, the employers contended in the evidence that the number of dismissals in recent months had not been appreciably larger than at any other period. We have not had the time for a detailed enquiry nor could we even otherwise afford to be diverted from our main task to a detailed investigation of the matter. At the same time, we must say that we regard it as of the greatest necessity that some machinery should be provided whereby the workers can be satisfied that a particular dismissal was justified. It is vigorously denied by the employers that any dismissals have taken place for other than a just cause. There should, therefore, be no difficulty in explaining to the worker concerned, or to a responsible representative of his union the precise reasons for such action. The worker should have the right of having his case taken up by the Trade Union of which he is a member with the mill concerned. The services of the Labour Officer and the Conciliation Officer may be utilised at a later stage, if necessary. If the reason for dismissal hinges on a technical matter, the services of an independent technical expert may also be requisitioned. The main point is that the worker should be convinced that there has been no victimisation. If on enquiry the grounds for dismissal are found to be inadequate, the worker should, failing reinstatement, be entitled to adequate compensation.

154. It is impossible to lay down with precision what should be regarded as adequate grounds for dismissal. Arguing, however, on the analogy of one of the provisions in the Payment of Wages Act, which limits the power of an employer in regard to fines, both as regards the amount and as regards the reasons for such punishment, it seems to us that the right of dismissal should be restricted in a similar manner to gross misdemeanour or wilful and serious neglect of duty. This is not a challenge to the inherent right of an employer to employ or dismiss, but

we wish merely to ensure that dismissals are imposed only for offences of a certain gravity. Even at present a worker, who feels that he has been wrongfully dismissed, is at liberty to go to a Civil Court and sue his employer for damages. But this procedure is so tedious, cumbersome and costly that it is seldom, if ever, resorted to. Our proposal that the dispute should be referred to a Conciliation Officer is merely a simplification of that procedure. What we urge further is that the Conciliation Officer should have the power, if on investigation he is convinced that the dismissal was unjust or based on inaccurate grounds, to convert it into a discharge and reckon the compensation to be paid either at the rate of fifteen days' wages for every year of service or a lump amount not exceeding six months' wages. He may in addition award at his discretion the full or a part of the wages of the period subsequent to the dismissal.

155. We wish to bear witness to the fact that previous to recent months, the number of dismissals in Cawnpore Mills on the whole was small. We hope that this record may soon be recaptured and actual trust established. Employers themselves informed us that they had no desire to lose their good workmen.

156. *Censure notices:* Apart from summary dismissals, which we trust will be few and far between, we would recommend the practice, now adopted in some mills in Cawnpore, of issuing censure certificates or warning notices. In those mills three warnings, given within a fixed period of time, will render a worker liable for dismissal. The fault for which he is warned has to be duly adjudicated and recorded in his service sheet or card. In this manner men will gain a sense of security. Nothing is feared by the workers as much as the liability of dismissal. We cannot accept the proposition that this feeling of insecurity of retaining their jobs is an element which keeps them up to the mark. Such fear inhibits and depresses the faculties. We rather think that a sense of security, coupled with the assurance of fair dealing, will lend confidence to men, and release and promote in them all those latent forces which make for a contented and efficient labour force. We cannot too strongly emphasise this point.

## CHAPTER IX

### LEAVE

157. *Facilities for leave:* One of our terms of reference asks us to lay down the terms under which leave should be granted to workers in cases of sickness or other emergency. We have given this question our anxious consideration. At present all leave is without pay both for time and piece workers. From the employers' evidence fed before us the position seems to be that reasonable facilities are afforded to operatives who wish to go on leave and, except perhaps

during some special periods, for example the marriage season, occasions when reasonable requests for leave are turned down, are not many. The operatives seldom, if ever, give any previous intimation of their intention to take leave, and sanction of leave must necessarily sometimes take two or three hours. On the other hand, we have had the allegation from the workers' side that mistries create impediments in the way of a worker getting leave, and that they expect a cash payment or other benefit before they make a recommendation in favour of the applicant. Unless the general tone of the mistryship system, about which we have made observations elsewhere, is improved, complaints of this nature are bound to occur, and we trust that the employers will continue to investigate them with care whenever they are brought to their notice and take punitive action as the circumstances of the case may warrant.

158. *Desirability of a provision for leave with pay:* We feel, however, no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that there should be some provision for leave with pay. The average Cawnpore worker comes from the countryside where he is accustomed to work in the open. In the factory he is employed on work which needs constant attention and vigilance. The change is bound in time to impair his health. Further, in Cawnpore he has to live in surroundings whose squalor and filth defy description. This places an additional handicap on him. Though detailed figures of the incidence of sickness among the workers are not available, we have reasons to believe that it must be very high. Ill health accounts for a large number of leave applications and, under the present conditions, a worker is deprived of his earnings at a time when he most needs them. Anything that is done therefore to alleviate his sufferings should be looked upon by the employers as a part of welfare work. While we recognise the merit of the welfare work that is already being done by the employers in Cawnpore, we think it is fair to add that they are doing comparatively little and have been less responsive in this direction than employers in many other textile centres. We would, therefore, strongly urge the consideration of the proposals that we are going to make for leave with pay. The weekly holiday is utilised by the workers for much-needed rest after a strenuous week, and for such purposes as washing their clothes and making sundry purchases for themselves and their families. The various religious holidays serve a definite purpose and are not designed to suit the workers' health or other personal requirements. What is needed is some relief from the financial burden of the periods during which the worker must of necessity stop work.

159. *Effect of leave with pay on absenteeism:* We believe that suitable provision for leave with pay will also tend to reduce the evil of absenteeism. When leave is without pay, a worker will frequently overstay it. On the contrary, if he were granted leave with pay, it would act as a psychological incentive to return to work punctually. If a yearly limit for leave with pay were fixed, we are of the opinion that most of the workers would not exceed that limit. We propose therefore to relate our proposals to the extent of absenteeism.

160. *Extent of absenteeism:* We have no definite data by which to judge the actual extent of absenteeism in the Cawnpore mills. Most of the mills informed

the Committee that they had kept no records of absenteeism. On behalf of the Mazdoor Sabha it was contended that normal absenteeism was about 10 per cent, a statement which we are inclined to accept. *The Report of the Royal Commission on Labour, Evidence*, Vol. III—Part I, page 250, contains the written evidence of the Upper India Chamber of Commerce which says, "In regard to absenteeism, it has been extremely difficult to arrive at any precise figure but it is stated that absenteeism prevails to the approximate extent of 10 per cent with a 10 per cent loss of wages." The *Wages and Labour Conditions in Cawnpore* at page 114 gives a statement showing absenteeism in a representative textile mill, day by day, for one month which leads to the conclusion that in that month absenteeism amounted to 10.5 per cent. One employer in the course of his evidence before us said that absenteeism in his weaving shed was 7.2 per cent, while another estimated it to be just under 15 per cent for the entire mill. It will, therefore, be safe to conclude that the average absenteeism is approximately 10 per cent or 30 days in a year, the average number of working days being 300.

161. *Our recommendation about leave with pay:* We therefore recommend that a provision should be made for 15 days' privilege leave with full pay subject to the limitation that only workers with not less than two years' continuous service should be entitled to it. In addition such workers should be eligible to get 15 days' sick leave on half pay. This should be converted into full pay for those whose period of service extends beyond five years. The sick leave is intended to be given only in cases of actual sickness to be certified either by the mill doctor or another registered physician. Either kind of leave may be obtained either at one stretch or in broken periods, according to the necessities of the case. These provisions, we are sure, will ensure greater regularity of attendance, increased efficiency and make industrial life more attractive than it is. They will also help to build up a permanent labour force. If the millowners afford facilities to their workers to go home to recoup their health or to join their relations on occasions of marriage or other ceremonies, they would return with better health and increased efficiency and be more ready to face the difficulties and hardships of city life.

162. We suggest that necessary rules in this connection may be made by the Employers' Association in consultation with the Mazdoor Sabha and the Government Labour Commissioner.

163. *Financial effect of our proposals:* The proposals that we have made are by no means an innovation for the textile industry. Somewhat similar schemes are already in operation elsewhere, for instance in Madras in the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills. The financial burden that they will impose on the employers will not be heavy. If all the workers were entitled to thirty days' leave with full pay, the addition to the labour costs will be one-twelfth or about 8 per cent. But in view of the qualifications we have suggested above for the grant of such leave, the total addition should not exceed 6 per cent. The greater contentment and efficiency, which will result, will lighten the burden on the industry still further.

164. *Determination of rate of pay during leave:* As regards the determination of the rate of pay during the period of leave, in the case of the time-workers, there is no difficulty. They are paid either at a daily or a monthly rate and the calculation will be simple, but there may be some difficulty in the case of the piece-rate workers. A ready method will be to reckon on the basis of the average of three months previous to the leave, and we recommend this for adoption. To take the yearly average may introduce unnecessary complications and cause misunderstanding and discontent.

## CHAPTER X

### GENERAL WORKING CONDITIONS

165. *Scope of the Chapter:* In this chapter we propose to pass in brief review some aspects of the general conditions of work inside the textile mills in Cawnpore of which mention has not been made elsewhere in the report.

166. *Cleanliness, ventilation and lighting:* The general standard of cleanliness and ventilation in Cawnpore textile mills is up to the requirements of the *Factories Act*. Lapses are not frequent and the factory inspectorate has not had many occasions for finding fault on this ground. The same may be said of lighting arrangements.

167. *Drinking water facilities:* One criticism was true of the arrangements for the supply of drinking water. The complaint was not about adequacy of water supply, but it was alleged that during the hot weather the water was not cool enough for drinking. One or two mills stated that they had a provision for the supply of ice-cooled water, but it was alleged on the other side that the arrangement was ineffective. We bring this complaint to the notice of the employers in the hope that they will do what they can to remedy it. We would recommend for their consideration the spray system of providing drinking water adopted in some centres in India wherever water is supplied outside in the mill compound. We desire that some kind of shade also should be provided to protect the worker from the sun and rain. If some kind of creepers could be run such structures it could make the drinking spot cooler and pleasanter.

168. *Use of latrines and urinals:* From the workers' side an allegation has been made that in several mills undue restrictions were placed on the use of latrines and urinals. For instance in one case it was said that no worker was allowed to use them for an hour after the work was started and an hour before the work ceased. In another case the complaint was that if a worker went to the latrine very often or stayed there too long, he was taken to task. The majority of the mills, however, imposed no such restrictions, and in our opinion the others



should fall into line. We would wish that more urinals at least should be provided at convenient points to save the workers, and particularly the older workers, from going up and down a great deal. Wherever possible, flush latrines should be provided.

169. *Cooling and humidification:* Complaints against cooling and humidification arrangements were louder. Some mills are equipped with air-conditioning plants which operate in the main departments of the mill and secure for the worker the best possible atmospheric conditions. Arrangements, however, in several other mills leave much to be desired. In view of our advocacy of rationalisation schemes, we must lay the greatest emphasis on cooling and humidification arrangements. The workers must be saved unnecessary exhaustion and physical exertion. Exhaust fans are in some cases admittedly not very efficient and they should be improved in order to meet the dust evil effectively.

170. *Eating places:* The mills, generally, do not provide any resting place where the workers can take shelter during the recess periods. The shade of the mills is the only protection from heat and rain and we fail to understand how any worker can sleep during the night recess in winter. Some mills allow him to bring his bedding and blanket but he has to find for himself where he can sleep. Generally the only place available is the space between two machines or the corner of a shed where sleep is impossible owing to noise of the mill. The rules framed under the Indian Factories Act empower the local Government to compel the owner of any premises where 50 or more men work, to provide resting places. We would welcome the use of that power. Resting places should be provided separately for men and women. The provision of adequate resting places would be a substantial gain to the workers, especially during the hot days of the summer months. Mere erection of sheds will not be satisfactory. Large halls, with due protection from heat and cold, would be better.

171. Some mills have mill-gardens. We advocate the adoption of this practice by all. Every effort to make mill premises pleasant and attractive reaps its own reward. Rest halls that we advocate should be located near such mill-gardens.

172. *Facilities for taking meals:* There has been some complaint of lack of facilities for taking meals. Practice in this respect differs from mill to mill. While some mills allow freedom within certain hours, others insist that meals can be taken only during the recess. Dining sheds are provided only by a few mills but even these are hardly adequate.

173. We recommend uniformity of rules in respect of meal hours. Regarding the provision of dining sheds, the problem is complicated by caste restrictions and differing social customs in this country. But there is no reason why a beginning should not be made. Conditions are changing rapidly and the existing barriers are fast crumbling. We are of the opinion that more dining sheds should be erected.

174. *Holidays:* We now come to an important question, namely, the number of working days in a year. Under the Factories Act, the maximum number of

working days in a year of 365 days is 313; all that the Act requires is a weekly holiday. In the course of their evidence before us the workers expressed a desire that Sundays should be observed as holidays invariably. In addition, they wanted holidays on the occasion of the principal Hindu and Mohammedan festivals. These total up to about 30 days. If therefore all Sundays and festivals are allowed, the number of working days will be reduced to about 285 days in a year. This will manifestly be unfair to the Cawnpore textile industry. The productive capacity of the industry should not be handicapped to such an extent as to give other centres an undue advantage over Cawnpore. According to the Employers' Association, in some other parts of India the number of working days varies from 300 to 313, with certain Indian States working up to 316 days. The lists of holidays observed by the Bombay mills show that their average number of working days is 310. From the figures supplied to us by the Mazdoor Sabha, the all-India average, excluding Cawnpore, for 1936 was 297 days. The average of Cawnpore itself in that year was 302.4. Any serious departure from the proximity of these figures is therefore likely to tell adversely upon Cawnpore industry.

175. We feel, however, that the practice of allowing a fixed day every week (which can only be Sunday) is a very salutary one. The workers are very keen on a fixed weekly holiday which introduces in their lives a much desired regularity. It gives them rest after a strenuous week and enables them to meet their friends and relatives. At the same time, national and local festivals are equally important. Their observance enables the workers to participate in religious, social, and cultural functions. A compromise has therefore to be evolved which will allow the workers the necessary holidays facilities and at the same time give the industry a reasonable number of working days.

176. We are of opinion that it will be fair to limit the number of working days in Cawnpore to 300. The remaining 65 days should be observed as holidays. The Employers' Association should prepare a list of holidays in consultation with the labour representatives in such a manner that it contains the maximum possible number of holidays and the maximum number of festivals.

177. *Factory Inspectorate:* Before we conclude this chapter we should like to draw the attention of the Government to the inadequacy of the factory inspectorate in this province. Besides the Chief Inspector of Factories, there is at present only one whole-time Assistant Inspector of Factories. The four Inspectors of Boilers are also empowered to inspect factories, but they seldom find time to make any factory inspections. With this staff we are convinced that it is not possible effectively to enforce the provisions of the various Acts and rules which the department of the Chief Inspector of Factories is called upon to administer. The total number of registered factories in the province was 576 in 1936, and there is likely to be a rise in future. The question is not merely of visiting the factories once or twice every year. What is of equal and perhaps greater importance is the follow-up work which these visits involve. A factory inspector should have adequate time and resources at his disposal to see that

defects discovered by him are speedily removed. He should not be content, as is the case at present, with a visit of inspection; it is his duty also to apply remedial measures effectively and promptly. He is not able to do this at present; in fact, we are told that some factories even escape inspection altogether every year. We would therefore suggest immediate strengthening of the staff by the addition of at least two whole-time assistant factory inspectors.

## CHAPTER XI

### LABOUR ORGANISATION

178. *Desirability of labour organisation:* It is hardly necessary for us to stress the desirability of a sound labour organisation in every industry, which, in the present circumstances of Cawnpore, may be regarded as a matter of vital importance. Practically every employer, who appeared before the Committee, stated that he would welcome one run on sound trade union lines. In fact, some of them expressed an anxiety to deal with a properly constituted trade union. We felt that such anxiety was genuine, whatever may have been the attitude in the past. It is essential for the industrial and general peace of Cawnpore that the employers should, unreservedly, accept the principle of organisation of the workers for the purpose of collective bargaining. The experience of Cawnpore confirms that of other industrial centres in India that where trade unionism has been discouraged, by the employers, more extreme principles have found congenial soil. It would be both short-sighted and wrong for the employers to deny to the workers any longer the right of organisation and to refuse to discuss with their accredited representatives matters affecting their wages and working conditions. From the point of view of the worker too, we are confident that provided he feels assured of the effectiveness of a healthy trade union capable of protecting his legitimate interests he will submit to its discipline and willingly accept its guidance in his relations with the employer. His present mood in Cawnpore we interpret as essentially one of despair, and there is probably some justification for such an attitude. Some employers told us that complaint boxes in their mills had always been empty. It would be impossible to infer that there were no complaints to register! According to our reading of the situation, complaints were not registered, either because the complainants thought such procedure to be futile, or because they feared that the complaints might recoil on themselves. In these circumstances it is abundantly clear to us that a proper trade union should be allowed to function without any obstacles being placed in its way. A strong union is an invaluable asset in several ways and is an insurance against unauthorised, irregular and lightning strikes.

179. *The Mazdoor Sabha:* We have examined in some detail the constitution and working of the Mazdoor Sabha which is practically the only labour organisation of textile workers in Cawnpore. The Sabha was registered under the Companies Act in 1920 and later on under the Trade Unions Act in 1927. Immediately after registration under the Trade Unions Act, the President sent a circular letter to all the employers of labour in Cawnpore asking for an opportunity to work in co-operation with them for the discussion and redress of the workers' grievances. Only one concern agreed to consider representations made by him regarding the workers employed in the mills controlled by them. Another mill recognised the right of the Mazdoor Sabha to represent the workers' grievances in 1929; but this recognition was also withdrawn in a short time. It was on August 9, 1937 after the acute unrest amongst the workers had culminated in a general strike and only through the personal intervention of the Premier, that the Employers' Association, representing most of the mills in Cawnpore, recognised the Mazdoor Sabha as a representative union on behalf of the workers. But this recognition again proved a short-lived phase.

180. *Employers' objections to Mazdoor Sabha:* The employers have challenged the representative character of the Mazdoor Sabha and its ability to control and guide labour on proper lines. They have complained seriously of lack of discipline among the workers who, they consider, are deceived and misled by communist propaganda. In their memorandum the Employers' Association allege that "the men at present do not understand the true function of Trade Unions and seem to be under the impression that they can form Mill Committees by arbitrary methods and dictate the action of the management in the control of labour". The memorandum points out that this attitude has to be abandoned before there can be any real peace, and proceeds to lay down a series of conditions which should be fulfilled before a trade union can be recognised.

181. *Reorganisation of Mazdoor Sabha:* It is relevant to point out, however, that the past attitude of the employers in general towards the Mazdoor Sabha cannot be described as either sympathetic or liberal-minded. Yet no one, we think, can fairly deny that the present constitution of the Mazdoor Sabha is weak. It needs overhauling in certain respects. The existing rules prescribe an annual payment of subscription and contact between the Central Executive and the members has been at best slender and fitful. Mill Committees have in recent months sprung up under the guidance and inspiration of left wing leaders without any place in the constitution, and acted on their own initiative without the consent of the Mazdoor Sabha. Steps are, however, being taken to remedy these inherent weaknesses, and we have reasons to believe that in its new form the Mazdoor Sabha will be run on generally accepted trade union principles. Without in any way wishing to dictate to the Mazdoor Sabha we would like to make particular mention of some salient features which may suitably find a place in the reorganised constitution.

182. *Method of election:* It will generally be conceded that the method of election of the office-bearers and of the Executive should be by secret ballot. The

importance of this in the interests of the workers cannot be denied, for it would furnish them with experience in the conduct of all elections and thus train them in one of the most essential arts of citizenship, namely, correct procedure in voting. We have no doubt that the value of this will be appreciated by the Mazdoor Sabha as lending both reality and strength to the organisation.

183. *Representation of various centres:* Equally desirable, in our opinion, is the necessity for adequate representation on the Executive for all categories of workers, so that no particular section or grade obtains predominance. Also, in view of the peculiar problems of unskilled workers and of women, who form a small but important proportion of the total number, the advantage of securing special representation for them in the Executive of the Mazdoor Sabha need hardly be elaborated.

184. *Principle of rotation:* Due weight will no doubt be accorded to the principle of rotation in the composition of the Executive Committee, without impairing the principle of continuity or sacrifice of efficiency. The essential point, it seems to us, is that the Mazdoor Sabha must remain and function on a thoroughly representative and democratic basis.

185. *Declaration of strikes:* The procedure in regard to the declaration of strikes is also a matter of considerable importance. The workers' right to strike is undeniable. But the strike weapon is a double-edged sword and needs to be wielded with the greatest of caution and only in the last resort. It is extremely undesirable from any point of view that lightning strikes should be declared, any more than sudden lockouts. Both are reprehensible methods of industrial warfare and inflict injury not only on the two disputant parties, but tend seriously to dislocate industrial activity, and may, on occasions, endanger the peace of the city.

186. Strikes and lockouts should be the last possible step in the settlement of a dispute. Strikes should be undertaken with due deliberation. In the first instance, the Executive Committee should not decide upon a strike by a bare or simple majority of votes. Some proportionate majority, say, two-thirds, should be required over a simple majority.

187. The decision of the Executive Committee in favour of a strike should be submitted for ratification to a properly constituted general body of voters of the Trade Union. The decision in favour of the strike should be by a similarly proportioned majority and not by a bare or simple majority.

188. Voting on this matter of strike, both in the Executive Committee and in the general meeting, should not be by show of hands as now, but by the well-recognised democratic process of the secret ballot. Secrecy of voting is fundamental.

189. We were glad to note from the evidence of the representative of the Mazdoor Sabha that there is a growing realisation among the workers that due deliberation should precede the declaration of strikes and that the normal method of settlement of grievances should preferably be through representation and negotiation. We are confident that in reorganising the Mazdoor Sabha its

leaders will attach proper weight to the need for outlining the procedure in regard to strikes so that such direct action may not be forced upon a large body of workers by an assertive but well-organised and militant minority. The assurance was given to the Committee by the President of the Mazdoor Sabha that he would have no objection to accepting the method of representation and conciliation in regard to matters in dispute and to adequate notice being given in the event of a strike becoming a necessity.

190. *Mill Committees:* Mill Committees may perform a useful service and be given a definite place in the constitution, provided they undertake the duty of collecting information regarding wages and general conditions of work in their respective mills. They should not, however, be empowered to take any independent action, much less declare a strike without the consent of the parent body. They should, in short, act merely as agencies to gather and supply to the Mazdoor Sabha such information as the Central Executive may call for.

191. *Executive Committee:* As regards the constitution of the Executive Committee, its present strength is fifty members, of whom only nine are outsiders. This proportion is much less than is permissible under the Trade Unions Act and was accepted as a fair one by the representatives of the Employers' Association in giving evidence before us. The time must come sooner or later in India when leaders of the trade union movement will be found from amongst the workers themselves. But at present an outside element is both necessary and inevitable and for that reason the Trade Unions Act has made suitable provision in that regard.

192. *Recognition of the reorganised Mazdoor Sabha by employers:* As we have already pointed out with one or two exceptions, the employers have not only not recognised the Sabha, but have consistently ignored its existence in the past except for short periods at the end of a strike. It is only after the general strike in July last, when the membership of the Mazdoor Sabha grew from 3,000 to 12,000, that any notice seems to have been taken of it by the employers. In these circumstances it is not possible to take seriously the objection of the employers that the Mazdoor Sabha is not sufficiently representative of the workers. In any case, we would refer to the view of the Royal Commission on Labour which pointed out with great cogency that the argument of a union not being sufficiently representative of the workers is unsound in principle. We would urge, therefore, that the Mazdoor Sabha, reorganised on sound lines, should be recognised by the employers without any further conditions being imposed. We are glad to note that the representative of the Employers' Association while giving evidence before us said that the conditions laid down in the Association's memorandum were not the final word on the subject.

193. The suggestion was made to us that there should be a statutory obligation upon employers to recognise all registered trade unions. This is certainly not an unknown method and is adopted in a leading democratic country. Industries that receive special State protection or assistance may well be obliged to accord such recognition. We are, however, not disposed at this juncture to make such a

officials or members draw to themselves the hostility of the employers will completely disappear. Men should know that merely active work on behalf of their Trade Union would not jeopardise the security of tenure of their jobs. Also the fear of espionage of the workers—they often used the word "C.I.D." of the employers—should be completely eradicated. An atmosphere of fairplay and freedom must be created and maintained. It is only under such conditions that a healthy and helpful workers' organisation can grow up. Any other attitude displayed by the employers is bound to deflect it into unwholesome and undesirable channels. The intelligent and active co-operation of the workers is an essential requisite in the conduct of modern industry. Employers in their evidence before us, we are glad to note, have begun to accept this fact.

198. The progress of the industry, many of them told the Committee, would be impossible beyond a certain limit without the active co-operation of the workers. Collaboration rather than conflict should be the new note, and employers must give every encouragement to this attitude. It is essential that contacts should be fostered between employers and workers and not brought about only when there is likelihood of friction or a dispute to be settled. Consultations for their mutual benefit and the good of industry in general cannot but produce wholesome and lasting results. It is for the employers no less than for the responsible leaders of the workers to strive for the building up of this mutual regard and thus create confidence in each other.

## CHAPTER XII

### HOUSING

199. *Cawnpore, the biggest industrial centre in Northern India:* Cawnpore has developed in recent years into the biggest industrial centre in Northern India. In 1900 its population was 1,72,694, in 1931 it was 2,19,189, and now it is estimated to be nearing 3 lacs. The area covered by the Municipality during this period has remained the same, i.e., about 9 square miles. In one section of the city, Talaq Mohal of Anwarganj Ward, the density of population is 1,229 persons per acre:

200. Besides having a large number of cotton, spinning and weaving mills, Cawnpore is an important centre for the tanning and manufacture of leather goods. There are also a number of sugar refineries, engineering works, foundries, brushware factories, oil and flour mills, jute and woollen mills, ice factories and chemical works. The total number of persons employed in all the factories is about seventy-five thousand. A number of mills, namely, the Cawnpore Woollen Mills, the Elgin Mills, the Muir Mills, the New Victoria Mills,

Cooper Allen Co., the North Western Tannery and the Electric Power House are situated in the heart of the city.

201. *Housing accommodation provided by employers:* Very little attention was, until recently, paid to the question of housing this large and rapidly increasing population. The British India Corporation which controls a number of important cotton, woollen and leather factories did pioneer work towards the provision of suitable house accommodation for various classes of their employees. The actual provision consists of three settlements known as (1) the MacRobertganj settlement, (2) the Allenganj settlement, and (3) the Kakomiganj settlement for the workers employed primarily in the Cawnpore Woollen Mills, the Cooper Allen Tannery and the Cawnpore Cotton Mills. These settlements provide accommodation for about eight thousand people. Besides these, several tanneries, sugar works and other factories also provide accommodation for a limited number of their workers. Recently, the Elgin Mills Co. Ltd. purchased over a hundred quarters from the Improvement Trust for their employees. Altogether the accommodation provided by employers consists of about two thousand tenements which house about ten thousand persons. Details about accommodation, including rents charged in the more important of the settlements, are given below:

### I. MacRobertganj

<i>No. &amp; type of quarters</i>	<i>Rent per month (Rs.)</i>
655 single	1/4/-
105 double	4/8/-
30 double (superior)	8/-/-
12 bungalow type	16/-/-
Total No. of houses—802	
Number of workmen housed—937	
Total village population—3,084	

### II. Allenganj

<i>No. &amp; type of quarters</i>	<i>Rate per month (Rs.)</i>
72 single	1/2/-
700 single	1/10/-
50 double	3/4/-
8 double	4/-/-
14 double (superior)	5/-/-
5 4-unit	10/-/-
2 6-unit	11/-/-



<i>No. &amp; type of quarters</i>	<i>Rate per month (Rs.)</i>
4 6-unit	12/-/-
2 6-unit	17/-/-

Total number of houses—853

Number of workmen housed—1,102

Total village population—3,472

The 72 single quarters with the lowest rent measure 10' × 8' with a verandah 8' × 5.3'; the other 700 single quarters have in addition a courtyard measuring 8' × 6'.

### III. *Kakomiganj*

<i>No. &amp; type of quarters</i>	<i>Rent per month (Rs.)</i>
167 single	1/8/-
143 single	2/-/-
1 double	7/8/-
1 shop	3/8/-
5 shops	5/-/-

Total number of houses—318

Number of workmen housed—318

Total village population—1,000

Of the single quarters, there are 165 measuring 9' × 9' with a verandah 9' × 5.4'; 11 have in addition a courtyard 10' × 9'; 61 have rooms 9' × 9' and a verandah 9' × 8'; 63 have built-in verandahs fitted with doors; and 10 of similar construction also have courtyards measuring 18.6' × 9'. Non-workers are charged annas-/8/- per month extra for single quarters in the above three settlements.

### IV. *Elgin Settlement*

The settlement is situated on the banks of the Ganges. The total number of quarters is 145. They are of three kinds—a room with a verandah at Rs. 1/2/- per mensem; a room with a verandah and a walled courtyard with door at Rs. 1/8/-; two rooms with a verandah and a courtyard with door at Rs. 3/8/- p.m. The last mentioned are provided with electric lights. Besides his wife and children, no relations other than a widowed mother and sister are allowed to stay with an occupant. Workmen, unaccompanied by wives, are permitted to live in groups of three and four. Flush latrines are provided for both men and women.

### V. *Maxwellganj* (Khalasi Lines Settlement for the Elgin Mills workers.)

The total number of quarters is 104. The 'A' type of house has two rooms, a

verandah and a store room with wall shelves, a pucca cooking place, a walled courtyard with a door and a two-seated latrine. The rent is Rs. 6/8/- p.m. The 'B' type is the same as 'A' but with only one room. The rent is Rs. 3/4/-. The 'C' type has only one room and a verandah. The rent is Rs. 2/8/- per mensem. The roofs of 'A' and 'B' types are flat and cemented.

#### VI. *Jaggeryganj* (The Cawnpore Sugar Works Ltd.)

There are 120 houses for the sepoy, the workmen, the sweepers and the clerks. These are all rent-free. The settlement is adjacent to the factory.

#### VII. *Wishartganj* (The Cawnpore Sugar Works Ltd.)

There are 70 houses, all-rent-free. The settlement is situated outside the Municipal limits on a canal bank and enjoys all the advantages of open village life. Every house has a plot of land for cultivation. There are two blocks of quarters of pucca bricks and each block is made up of houses built back to back. Two rows of the quarters are of one type with a room and verandah, and the other two have a room, a verandah, and a walled courtyard. The settlement has three wells, ten Kerosene oil lights and a clock.

#### VIII. *The Cawnpore Textiles Ltd.*

There are only 40 quarters in this settlement, intended mainly for the sepoy and watchmen who are housed free of rent. When workmen occupy them they pay a rent of Re. 1/- p.m. per quarter.

202. Apart from the above, the general housing conditions are extremely unsatisfactory. The Census of India, 1931, shows that in the city of Cawnpore 62.5% of the families live in one room tenements; 24.8% in two rooms; 7.5% in three rooms; 2.9% in four rooms and 2.3% in five or more rooms.

203. Most of the workers have to live in slums locally known as ahatas, where small dingy rooms are let out on exorbitant rents. Most of these ahatas are extremely insanitary and overcrowded and lack adequate sunshine and ventilation, to say nothing of water, light and conservancy. Quite a number of huts are under the street level. The conditions under which men, women and children in their thousands—about forty thousand souls—live in these ahatas are indescribable. The space within each tenement where the worker with his family lives, often numbering 8 to 10 persons, is smaller than the space we usually have in our bath rooms. An animal, especially if it be a horse or a cow is given more room than the poor owners. A night visit for a stranger to these areas is a positively risky undertaking, a sprained ankle is almost a certainty, while a broken neck by stumbling into a blind well, or a goodly-sized hole, would not be an impossibility. Even the elementary service of public lighting is denied to these people. As for drainage and water supply, such luxuries are thought to be

superfluities. The underground rooms, in which thousands of Cawnpore workmen live, reminded one of the members of the Committee of the "dug-outs" of France during war-time. While the slum-dwellers would be somewhat protected from shot and shell in the event of an aerial bombardment, they are but an easy victim to those ever active enemies of mankind, namely the germ and the bug. These have wrought havoc especially amongst the ranks of infants, the young and the women. The rate of infant mortality in Cawnpore is till appallingly high. The paradox of the situation is that the ahata-owner, who has done the least for his tenants stands to gain the most at the time of acquisition of land either by the Municipality or the Improvement Trust. The entire situation is iniquitous. It should not be permitted to continue a day longer than possible. Little wonder that the so-called agitator in Cawnpore has such widespread and whole-hearted response from the labouring classes. The wonder is that they have kept silent for so long.

204. The pathos of the position is deeply impressed upon one's mind when one actually visits these workmen's quarters and spends some time in their homes. For, from within, these hovels are spotlessly neat and clean. We have not found the houses of the well-to-do people neater. We know several which would not be considered as clean. On the walls within and without there are to be seen drawings of human and animal figures, and floral decorations, all giving expression, be it however so primitive, to the inherent instinct for beauty in these slum-dwellers. Animal pets are also kept with great care and devotion. Wherever possible tiny plots of kitchen vegetables are grown with skilled attention. There is great richness of creative instinct within our workpeople. If only they could be given the opportunity to express and develop it! The frequent processions and endless shouting of slogans and the parading of streets are but manifestations of a restless energy which needs opportunities for expression. None could equal the absorbing outlet that good housing with garden plots could provide. What we saw in the Gutaiya area, developed by the Improvement Trust, convinces us beyond a shadow of doubt that workmen have to be provided with such facilities, if Cawnpore is to enjoy civic security and tranquillity.

205. There are about two hundred such ahatas within the Municipal limits which provide living accommodation to a very large number of people. They have existed in manifest contravention of municipal bye-laws with regard to ventilation, building, water supply, conservancy, etc. They must be hotbeds of disease and, judged on accepted standards of health, most of them are absolutely unfit for human habitation. Both the Chairman and the Executive Officer of the Municipal Board in their evidence before the Committee deplored this state of affairs, but pleaded helplessness in the matter, firstly because of powerful vested interests and secondly because of the lengthy and uncertain legal procedure involved.

206. *Efforts of the Improvement Trust:* The Improvement Trust has now earmarked a separate area outside the city proper on the Kalpi Road for mills and factories. A number of factories have already been set up in this area and the

workers employed therein reside either in the surrounding villages or in the workmen's dwellings constructed near about in the area set apart by the Improvement Trust for the purpose. The Executive Officer of the Improvement Trust stated in his evidence before the Committee that this area would provide house accommodation for about forty thousand people. At present, however, there is a distinct shortage of workmen's houses, resulting in congestion and high rents.

207. *Relation between housing and efficiency:* The Committee attaches the greatest importance to the question of housing. We have been unable to get any definite figures to establish the relation between good housing and efficiency of work, but we have it on the authority of Mr. A.L. Carnegie, who has thirty years' experience of the problem, that the incidence of sickness amongst workers living in the settlements is substantially lower than amongst those living outside, particularly during August and September when malaria is prevalent and that their general record of attendance is also more satisfactory. We firmly believe that better housing and better efficiency go together and it is therefore of the utmost importance to devise suitable means of meeting the housing needs of the industrial workers of Cawnpore.

208. *The housing problem:* The problem is clearly two-fold. The first is to improve or reconstruct the existing workmen's dwellings which fall below the minimum standard of health and sanitation. This will apply to most of the existing ahatas in the city proper as well as to many so-called temporary quarters set up by private individuals outside the city limits. The second and more important problem is to construct model workmen's dwellings both within the city as well as in the new industrial area. These dwellings should be designed to provide the maximum of comfort on the least possible outlay and be within the reach of the lowest classes of workers.

209. *Action to deal with existing ahatas:* As regards the question of dealing with the existing ahatas it is desirable that determined action should be taken to improve or acquire and refashion them. A joint committee of the members of the Municipal Board and the Improvement Trust, styled the Slum Clearance Committee, has been formed, and we understand that a list of fifteen of the worst ahatas has been prepared so that they may be taken up first. Schemes for acquiring them are said to be ready and will be considered shortly by the Improvement Trust. Action on these lines should be pursued with determination and persistence. What is necessary is the provision of funds to meet the losses in acquiring and improving the slums and a suitable amendment of Sec. 25 of the U.P. Town Improvement Act providing for a less cumbersome procedure in dealing with the matter. Under the existing law, the preparation of a detailed improvement scheme with complete plans and estimates is necessary before Government will sanction a slum acquisition proposal. The number of slums is large and the preparation of schemes in detail takes considerable time. A simplification is therefore necessary by which the necessity for detailed schemes will be done away with and the Trust will be authorised to assume powers under

Sec. 49(1) of the U.P. Town Improvement Act and prevent further undesirable constructions in the ahatas. The Trust has already moved the Government for amending Sec. 25 of the Act and we support that request. As we conceive it, the general plan of action will be that the ahata-owners will first be persuaded to improve the ahatas themselves according to the Trust design, but if they fail to do so within a specified time, no time should be lost in undertaking the acquisition and improvement proceedings. Not only should this procedure result in better progress in the absence of adequate finances, but it is probable that the ahata-owners who may not like to part with their property will welcome it.

210. *New dwellings to be constructed by Improvement Trust:* As regards the new dwellings to be constructed, local bodies have constructed houses for industrial workers in several foreign countries out of loans raised directly or by the state. There is no reason why the same should not be possible in Cawnpore. Both the Chairman, Municipal Board, and the Executive Officer, Improvement Trust, consider the need for industrial housing imperative, and expressed readiness to undertake the work provided Government could make available the necessary funds and invest them with reasonable powers to administer the scheme. Since the Improvement Trust has undertaken construction work on a large scale within recent years and is fully equipped with technical staff for the purpose this work may suitably be entrusted to it, with this provision that there should be some representative of the workers on the Trust. Men in whose interest the houses are being constructed should be consulted. The Mazdoor Sabha or the Workers' Building Co-operative Society, if such a body should be revived once more in Cawnpore, would be the fittest channel of representation.

211. *Money to be raised by loan:* The Executive Officer of the Municipal Board considered that a loan of Rupees three crores would be needed to solve the housing problem in Cawnpore. On the other hand, the Executive Officer of the Improvement Trust placed before us a more modest scheme involving a loan of Rupees fifty lakhs. The full details of these schemes we need not discuss in this report. According to the rough estimates given by the Executive Officer of the Improvement Trust, workmen's quarters consisting of a room 12'×9', a verandah 12'×7' and a courtyard 12'×10' will cost Rs.475/- each including the cost of land, overhead charges, water, conservancy, etc. When the houses are constructed on a large scale, further economies will be possible. By judicious planning and rigid economies it may be possible to bring down the cost to about Rs.400/- per house. If double storeyed houses are constructed within the city limits, the cost may be still further reduced. Houses of a better type consisting of an additional kitchen or also an additional room, a separate water tap and latrine can also be designed for superior grades of workmen. These may cost Rs.600/-, Rs.800/- or Rs. 1,000/- each. Houses of various types could be constructed in blocks of twenty to fifty houses, each block having separate water taps, latrines and open spaces. If a sum of Rs. ten lacs per annum is placed at the disposal of the Improvement Trust, about two thousand cheaper and five hundred superior quality houses can be constructed every year, and in five years there should be available about

12,000 houses giving accommodation to approximately forty thousand persons. Taking the present conditions of the money market into account it should not be difficult to float a loan repayable in about twenty years at 3% interest. If the sort of houses that we have proposed are let out at rents varying from Rs.1/4/- to Rs.3/8/- per mensem according to size, the realisation should cover the interest and depreciation charges. We strongly recommend, therefore, to the Government to float a loan for the purpose of providing suitable dwellings for industrial workers in Cawnpore.

212. *New houses should be built for rent: Administrative...Improvement Trust:* The Improvement Trust has already constructed about 200 model workers' quarters. Half of this number has been sold to Messrs. Elgin Mills Co. for the use of their workmen and the rest have been sold directly to workmen themselves on a twelve years' hire-purchase system. From the evidence led before us it appears that the hire-purchase system has been popular but there are considerations which seem to us to qualify the advantages of extending facilities of purchase to individuals. Outright sale carries with it the inevitable risk of the house passing from the hands of the original purchaser to those of one belonging to a class for whom it is not intended. Purchase facilities should, in our opinion, be restricted to genuine house-building co-operative societies such as may be started by the Mazdoor Sabha. We contemplate that the majority of the houses to be built by the Improvement Trust under the scheme proposed by us should be built for renting out to the workmen. In order to enable the Trust to do this provision will have to be made legislatively to invest it with powers to collect the rents expeditiously. If it has to resort to the lengthy and tedious process of the Civil Court to collect rent from or obtain ejectments of the defaulting tenants, the scheme is bound to fail. A suitable remedy will be to invest it with powers similar to those possessed by the Municipal Board to collect taxes and we commend this proposal to the notice of the Government. Another burden from which the Trust will have to be freed is Municipal taxation to which property owned by the Trust will be subject under the present rules. Under the existing rules a house or a set of tenements having a letting value of Rs.6/- or more per month has to pay a tax to the Municipal Board on a graded scale. We recommend that the property owned by the Improvement Trust which is used exclusively for housing the industrial workers should be exempted from this tax.

213. *Building facilities to private persons:* A number of employers of labour explained during their oral examination by the Committee that the Improvement Trust and the Municipal Board had not co-operated with them in providing suitable house accommodation for their workers. It was suggested that if the Improvement Trust were directed to make available suitable plots of land at a special rate and the Municipal Board could provide water and sewage facilities, many employers of labour would be willing to construct model workmen's settlements in Cawnpore. In particular, Mr. H. Horsman of the Swadeshi Cotton Mills offered to build quarters for 5,000 workmen if the Municipality could provide sewage and water supply. This is certainly one method of solving the

housing difficulty. The existing workmen's settlements constructed by the employers in Cawnpore are definitely superior to private houses available in the town and are, besides, distinctly cheaper. The workmen living in these settlements are also better looked after and have facilities of medical aid, education and sanitary arrangements which are not available elsewhere. We think, however, that if the Trust would be responsible for the scheme for building colonies, it would be a better proposition than allowing private speculators to profiteer at the expense of the poor workers or even allowing employers to build quarters. However good the intentions of an employer may be, the workers are at a disadvantage in living in quarters provided by them. They cannot feel absolutely free in such colonies; rightly or wrongly they feel that they are under some sort of surveillance. During a strike they are liable to be turned out, although no employer has done it in Cawnpore. Psychologically also it is not good for a worker to feel that he is under some restriction or other imposed by the employer not only during the working hours but also for the rest of the day.

214. *Transport arrangements:* We would like to see the relief of congestion in the overcrowded areas of the city by the development of the new Factory Workmen area, under the Improvement Trust. The movement of the workpeople will be facilitated by a cheap and quick bus transport service developed between this area and the other mills situated within the Municipal area. For, it is for obvious reasons that men wish to live as near to their place of work as possible. This matter of the bus service should not prove difficult of solution. There is already the Municipal bus service in existence. Arrangement with mill authorities for the transport of their workmen could be worked out. In any case, the transportation problem has to be considered in close relationship with the housing difficulty. In Cawnpore, as in most other congested industrial cities, the two are intimately connected with each other, and should command careful consideration.

215. *Provision for open spaces:* We would also wish to indicate that in the new Factory Workmen's area scrupulous care should continue to be exercised to maintain sufficient open spaces for parks and playing fields and other requisites for the institutional and corporative life of modern cities. The planning out of workmen's dwelling areas should not be considered merely from the point of view of brick and mortar, but should be considered from the larger and broader aspect of the citizen of the future, who will be demanding and desiring a richer and fuller life. Houses are erected not for the day, but for the generations to come.

216. We would like to conclude this chapter with a frequent statement from one of the great English authorities on the subject, and leave it for the reflection, and we trust also the action, of those who are in authority in one way or the other for the good of the working classes. The statement reads: "No housing evils are necessary; none need be tolerated. Where they exist, they are always a reflection upon the intelligence, right-mindedness and moral tone of the community."

## CHAPTER XIII

## LABOUR WELFARE

217. *Absence of personal contact between the employer and the employees in modern factories:* Modern methods of production in big factories have put an end to the personal relationship between the employer and his workmen characteristic of the earlier systems of production where the workman apprentice used to work with the artisan in his house under more or less homely and human surroundings. In the present complex organisation of production, the individual proprietor or the shareholders rarely have any personal contact with the workers. Even the Managing Director or the Manager is surrounded by such a large and varied class of overseers and has to look after such an ever-increasing and pressing variety of technical, administrative and financial problems that personal contact between the employer and the employees is hardly possible. The modern entrepreneur or captain of industry is a hard-worked individual. He is involved in the study of things and situations rather than in the direction or development of the human factor in industry. Modern industry has been depersonalised, if not actually dehumanised. It is one of the basic reasons for friction and strife in industry.

218. *Value of labour welfare work to employers:* Under these circumstances, the good employer, in order to improve the lot of the worker, provides some recreation and amenities of life. The growth of competition with producers in other countries and at home, however, has necessitated the concentration of all the energy and ingenuity of the management on reducing expenses of production and distribution rather than on the betterment of the conditions of labour. The gross illiteracy among the workers coupled with low wages, unemployment, inefficiency and lack of organisation intensify the separatist tendencies between the employers and the employees. With a view to provide some bonds of mutual interest and sympathy, employers in Western countries have often spent their accumulated fortunes in providing comfortable conditions of life and work for their employees. The numerous garden-cities and industrial suburbs scattered over England, the United States and the Continent serve to remind one of their benevolence, sense of humanity and fellow-feeling. Even in India many employers have spent large sums of money to provide suitable dwellings and other amenities of life to their workmen. In fact it is being slowly realised that the welfare and contentment of the workers may not be looked upon merely as a humanitarian and charitable proposition. It is in many ways a profitable expenditure or an investment in so far as a contented, healthy and intelligent labour force is a great asset to industry. Farsighted and enlightened employers, therefore, not only cater for the housing, medical relief and recreation of their workers, but also welcome organisation, education and enterprise among them.

219. *Scope of this chapter:* We have dealt with the question of housing in a



separate chapter and will therefore confine ourselves here to other welfare activities.

220. *Welfare work by employers in Cawnpore:* In Cawnpore the British India Corporation led the way by establishing three workmen's settlements, namely, MacRobertganj for the employees of the Cawnpore Woollen Mills, Allenganj for the employees of the North-Western Tannery and the Cooper Allen Boot Factory, and Kakomiganj for the employees of the Cawnpore Cotton Mills. They are justifiably proud of those settlements which provide house accommodation for 2,358 workmen, or about a third of the total employees of these mills. The accommodation available in these settlements is distinctly better and cheaper than that available in private *basties*. The settlements are, besides, clean and sanitary—a feature conspicuous by its almost entire absence in private *basties*. Education is provided free in boys', girls' and night schools maintained by the Corporation. Medicine and medical attendance are also available to the residents free of cost. Free milk is distributed to children and also food and clothing to specially necessitous cases from time to time. A fully qualified doctor is in charge of each of these settlements. Co-operative Societies have also been organised. Detailed information regarding welfare work under the British India Corporation settlements is given below:

### I. *Education:*

	<i>MacRobert- ganj</i>	<i>Allen- ganj</i>	<i>Kakomiganj</i>
(1) Enrolment in Boys' School	177	120	—
(2) Enrolment in Girls' School	186	97	—
(3) Enrolment in Night School	85	34	—

### II. *Medical Aid:*

(1) Cases treated in Male dispensaries during the last year	12,770	8,433	—
(2) Cases treated in Female dispensaries during the last year	10,887	1,706	13,226
(3) Cases in Baby Welfare Centres during the last year	3,310	6,356	3,693
(4) Cases treated in Mill dispensaries	34,214	30,448	62,717

### III. *Co-operative Societies:*

	<i>Lalimli</i>	<i>Cooper Allen</i>	<i>Kakomi</i>
(1) Number of Shareholders	504	642	870
(2) Loans advanced during the last financial year	Rs.42,933	Rs.28,422	Rs.42,723

	<i>Lalimli</i>	<i>Cooper Allen</i>	<i>Kakomi</i>
(3) Reserve Funds	Rs.9,779	Rs.1,189	Rs.2,36%
(4) Rate of interest per annum	12%	9%	*12½%

\*6¼% charged on loans for building purposes.

Messrs. Begg, Sutherland & Co. also finance welfare activities among the employees of the Cotton and Sugar Mills, Brushwares and the Electric Supply Corporation under their charge. These activities have been placed under the charge of the Y.M.C.A. (the present Secretary being Mr. Manohar Lal who has been in charge of the work for some years). They conduct Boys' and Girls' Schools, distribute milk to school children and organise indoor and outdoor games, sports, dramas, etc. Medical attendance is also provided free of charge to workmen. Messrs. Juggilal Kamlatpat, another important factory group in Cawnpore under the direction of Mr. Padampat Singhania, have started a club for the recreation of the workers. They hold an annual sports meet. This is a great event. One striking feature of this annual function is that women also participate. This should be encouraged more. They have also recently acquired a big plot of land from the Improvement Trust where they intend to set up model houses for various classes of workers. Messrs. H. & A. Horsman of the Swadeshi Cotton Mills Co. have made a munificent donation of Rs.3 lacs for the construction of the Ursula Horsman Memorial Hospital which has just been completed and provides the most modern convenience for the treatment and care of the poor.

221. *Extent of work hitherto done:* The pioneer work in the field of labour welfare has thus been done in Cawnpore through the generosity and farsightedness of some of its industrial magnates. But what has been accomplished is nothing as compared to what is required. There are about seventy-five thousand industrial workers in Cawnpore today. The welfare work organised by factory owners does not reach a great majority. The conditions of housing, sanitation, water supply and conservancy for most of the other workers are appalling. Education and medical relief are of the most primitive type and recreation facilities there are none. The average worker starts with debt which he secures from the Kabulee, the Mistry or the Baniya who alike manage to keep their principal intact from month to month and year to year in spite of substantial contributions from the workers' monthly or fortnightly earnings. The only relief available to the worker from the dirt and squalor of his house and its surroundings and the clutches of the money-lender is the liquor or the grog shop. To raise the worker from degradation and disease it is necessary not only to provide cheap and sanitary house accommodation and clean and healthy surroundings, but also wholesale and healthy recreation, medical relief and education. It is necessary that the state and the Municipality should come forward to relieve the sufferings of the factory workers whose importance to national and Municipal economy none can deny. It also should be borne in mind

that with the shortening of the working day, and consequent increasing leisure at the disposal of the worker, steps should be taken in time to create amenities which the worker can utilise gainfully. Idle hands are otherwise apt to find unhealthy and anti-social outlets. Utilisation of leisure for pleasure and for profit requires planning. It cannot just be left to hazard.

222. *Welfare work undertaken by Government in U.P.:* It is a matter for satisfaction that Government have come forward with a modest grant of Rs.10,000 in the present budget to provide some amenities of life to the workers. This grant deserves to be continued and substantially increased with a view to start a number of well-equipped welfare centres for the moral and material improvement of the workmen. The administration of the money has been vested in a welfare Committee consisting of the Director of Industries and Commerce, the Local M.L.A.s and M.L.C.s, a representative of the Municipal Board and the Labour Officer who acts as Secretary. Four Welfare Centres have been started at Gwaltoli, Deputy-Ka-Parao, Juhi and Jarib-ki-Chowki. The work of each centre is controlled by a paid organiser with the help of an assistant. Mr. Suraj Prasad Awasthi, M.L.A., the representative of unorganised labour in the Legislative Assembly has been appointed the Honorary Chief Organiser to supervise and co-ordinate the work of the various centres.

223. Each welfare centre has an allopathic dispensary with a whole-time compounder and a part-time qualified doctor in charge. A reading room, a library and a gymnasium are also attached to each centre. It is intended to organise sports, picnics and welfare entertainments for the benefit of the workers in each centre. It is also proposed to arrange useful talks on subjects like health, cleanliness, co-operation, education and organisation with the help of the microphone and magic lantern for the instruction and benefit of the workers. On the representation of the Welfare Committee the local Municipal Board has passed a resolution sanctioning a sum of Rs.500/- per month for the distribution of milk to working class children and for the supply of warm clothing to labour class women in confinement through the Government Welfare Centres. Much will depend upon the personnel and qualifications of the staff available and the amount of zest which they put into their work. But there can hardly be two opinions as to the usefulness of the project which deserves all encouragement. We should, however, very much wish to make the Welfare Committee more comprehensive. We are convinced that room on the committee should be found for employers' representatives. Welfare work is a type of activity where the largest measure of co-operation between employers and men can be secured. Full advantage should be taken of this. Hence employers' representatives should be given adequate representation.

224. We feel that the educational institutions which have experience of welfare work should be brought into close touch with these activities. In the local educational institutions enough men of ripe and rich experience can be found, who could with distinct advantage be made members of this Committee. Their presence would be a desirable and at the same time a valuable addition to the Committee.

225. The Y.M.C.A. throughout India have rendered helpful service in this field. In many ways they were the pioneers of such activities. At various industrial centres they have much developed work, which is being efficiently carried on. We suggest that they should be given representation on the Committee. Their trained assistance should be enlisted in this direction.

226. The Seva Samiti should also be included in this Committee. They have much valuable experience to offer in this connection.

227. Athletics form a very large part of welfare work. It is good that this is so. We therefore suggest that the U.P. Olympic Association should be linked with the welfare activities in Cawnpore. We suggest that the Secretary of the Cawnpore District Olympic Association should be given a place on the Committee. This is a very necessary addition.

228. The Rama Krishna Mission have rendered commendable work in ministering to the sick. This useful work should be recognised. They should find a place on the Committee. Their varied and valuable experience will supply much strength to the Committee.

229. In view of the increasing attention paid to balanced diets it will be appropriate to have on the Committee at least one who has had the benefit of training in dietetics, facilities for which exist in more than one centre in India.

230. A welfare work committee without women on it is but a one-sided affair. One of the reasons of the great success of welfare work in Bombay has been due to the active participation of women in this type of work. We hope the enlightened ladies from Cawnpore may find place on this Committee. They will import keenness and zest into the work and grace which men are incapable of achieving, however much they may wish it.

231. We, therefore, suggest a general Welfare Council, where all these interests can be combined for this whole purpose and then a representative Executive Committee. The present composition of the Committee does not seem to us to be entirely satisfactory.

232. It is satisfactory to note that the U.P. Government have brought forward a bill providing for the payment of maternity benefits to women employed in industry both before and after confinement for a total period of 8 weeks. The necessity of such benefits has been emphasised time and again by the International Labour Office, the Royal Commission on Labour and other authoritative persons and bodies.

233. *Maternity and child welfare work:* Another important direction in which attention may be directed is maternity and child welfare. The Red Cross Society had generally taken up this work with the assistance of funds from the Municipal Board. It is, however, desirable to extend further these activities and to have an organisation of health visitors and child welfare centres in important centres of industry like Cawnpore for the medical examination of industrial workers and their children. These centres might also form the nuclei of systematic propaganda on diet, prevention of disease and general principles of health. These centres have largely to be organised and financed by big employers of labour or important

factory groups. Financial assistance might also be given by Municipal authorities and Provincial Governments for approved schemes, subject to inspection, supervision and maintenance of reasonable standards of efficiency. Arrangement should also be made by Government for the training of health visitors and midwives for employment in these centres.

234. *Sickness insurance:* We have been particularly impressed by the great want of adequate arrangements for medical assistance to working class families. The ravages of malaria, tuberculosis and the respiratory diseases among the industrial population are responsible for loss of efficiency and irregularity of attendance. Medical facilities are no doubt available in some measure at factories but these are generally inadequate. It is, therefore, desirable to examine the possibilities of a regular scheme of sickness insurance for industrial workers. As the Royal Commission on Labour has pointed out, the incidence of sickness in India is substantially higher than in the West. The wages generally paid make it impossible for most of the workers to get through more than a very short period of illness without borrowing. The Commission have recommended a scheme of sickness insurance by the employers on a contributory basis by small deductions from wages of the workers. We unhesitatingly endorse that recommendation for adoption in Cawnpore. One witness suggested a contribution of 2½% of the wages earned by the workers and an equal amount to be subscribed by the employers for the purpose. The scheme deserves further consideration. There is no doubt that it could be worked. It will, however, be necessary to collect much more detailed statistical data before the details could be filled in. Organisation and expansion of the medical arrangements will also be necessary. Probably the state should also make some contribution to the scheme, either directly or by the provision of a larger number of free dispensaries in workmen's areas.

235. *Provident Fund Scheme:* We are anxious that some provision should be made for the worker in his old age. We, therefore, suggest a Contributory Provident Fund Scheme. We indicate the lines on which this may work. Modifications may be introduced by the Employers' Association in consultation with the Mazdoor Sabha.

236. Since we have suggested in the chapter on Wages that the minimum wage should be Rs.15/- in the textile industry, it follows that no adult male worker will get less than this amount. Those receiving this wage and above will contribute every month half anna per rupee of wages earned, and the employers will add an equal amount. No worker would be entitled to receive the employers' contribution until he has put in at least ten years' service, or is discharged earlier for physical disability or in consequence of rationalisation or retrenchment. But in cases of dismissal, no forfeiture of the employers' contribution should be assumed, unless the employee has obtained an award to that effect from the Conciliation Officer. Similarly, in cases of voluntary resignation, the primary responsibility for proving the claim to the employers' contribution rests on the worker. We need hardly add that the Provident Fund should be duly invested by each employer in accordance with rules to be made for the purpose. All women

workers receiving less than Rs.15/- will be exempted from making any contribution, but will be entitled to receive the employers' contribution.

237. *Protection of indebted workers:* More than one witness pointed out the necessity of protecting industrial workers from molestation and intimidation by unscrupulous money-lenders whose methods and manners are too well known to need description. We ourselves attach great importance to the problem of indebtedness amongst the industrial workers. The exorbitant rates of interest charged and the rough and ready methods adopted by some classes of money-lenders need to be definitely controlled, and we recommend that a measure for the protection of debtors somewhat on the lines of the Central Provinces Protection of Debtors Act of 1937, be immediately considered by Government. The main features of that Act are that molestation of a debtor by a creditor has been made a cognizable offence punishable with imprisonment up to three months or fine up to rupees five hundred, and molestation has been so defined as to include the use of violence, intimidation, persistent following about and loitering near a debtor's residence or his place of work. There is a more restricted Act in force in Bengal, but the C.P. Act is of wider application and we would prefer action on the C.P. lines in order that it may be effective. At the same time the formation of co-operative societies for lending out money at reasonable rates of interest should be fostered.

238. *Co-operative stores and canteens:* In another direction also the co-operative principle must be applied, namely, the formation of co-operative stores in each mill. The establishment of canteens is another matter which should engage the attention both of the employers and the workers. Pure and wholesome food at the cheapest rates should be provided, as is in fact being done at several industrial centres. These canteens may be utilised also as centres for propaganda in regard to cleanliness, nutrition, etc.

#### CHAPTER XIV

### LABOUR AND INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS

239. *Government to maintain detailed statistics:* The need for detailed and accurate statistical data regarding earnings and expenditure of factory labourers as also prices, employment, labour turnover, industrial disputes, etc., has been stressed from time to time by various committees and commissions appointed by Government. We have ourselves indicated in our Report how very seriously we have been handicapped in our enquiry for lack of sufficient and reliable statistical information and other data. In the absence of such details conclusions, however carefully arrived at, cannot be precise. Statements and counter-statements were

made before us by the Employers' Association and the Mazdoor Sabha regarding the rates of wages, bonuses and allowances which we were not in a position to confirm or challenge. It is imperative both in the interests of labour and of industry in general that systematic information should be collected and published on various problems affecting them by an impartial authority. From the point of view of Government also it would be extremely helpful to have accurate data so that prompt and remedial action may be taken at the proper time. Our Committee was greatly handicapped in its work by the lack of precise material regarding wages and cost of living without which it is not possible to form any precise idea of the adequacy of prevailing wages. We consider it absolutely necessary that detailed statistics should be collected, maintained and published periodically by Government.

240. *Establishment of a Labour Office:* We would therefore strongly recommend the establishment of a regular labour office on the lines of the Bombay Labour Office for the collection and publication of information regarding labour conditions and welfare. In this connection, we would suggest, further, that an Officer may be deputed for a reasonable period to Bombay to study the working and constitution of its Labour Office. As soon as possible thereafter, a detailed wages census should be undertaken in Cawnpore and in other industrial towns to obtain accurate information regarding attendance, turnover of labour, rates of wages, actual monthly earnings, bonuses, allowances, fines, etc. It seems to us also desirable to collect information regarding prices and the cost of living with a view to measure the standard of living of the workers and to see how far wages have kept pace with the cost of living. The information so collected should be carefully compiled and published for general information. It will be desirable to keep this information up to date by periodical inquiries. Another detailed census may be necessary after a period of, say, five to seven years.

241. *The supplementing of statistics maintained by the Chief Inspector of Factories:* Statistics of the number of factories of each class together with the number of persons employed in each are published by the Chief Inspector of Factories. Information regarding rest intervals, holidays and hours of work in these factories is also given. Statistics of the number of accidents, strikes and lockouts and the number of factory inspections carried out by the Factory Inspectors together with the number of convictions obtained for violations of the provisions of the Factories Act are also maintained by him. The information is, however, of a bald nature and needs to be presented in an intelligible and readable form. It is, for example, important to know the number of persons employed during the day and the night and the variations in attendance from season to season. In the case of industrial disputes, detailed information regarding the causes of such disputes, the terms of settlement and the loss to labour and industry in the form of wages and production needs to be ascertained and published. The number of members of registered trade unions is recorded by the Chief Inspector of Factories. It is desirable, however, to have further

information regarding the constitution of such unions; the benefits, if any, conferred by them on their members; the subscriptions realised; and other relevant details. It is also desirable to have some information regarding unions which are not registered.

242. *Statistics maintained by the Municipal Board:* Statistics of births, mortality and disease are collected by the Municipal Officers of Health. This information, however, is not classified according to the nature of the population: It will be useful to analyse the incidence of mortality and disease amongst industrial workers. Statistics of the number of persons treated for various diseases at Municipal and other dispensaries, if systematically compiled, will yield valuable information on the prevalence of sickness among various classes of people and possibly suggest the need for special measures of prevention and cure.

243. Statistics of the number of houses per acre and the number of occupants per house and per room were collected at the time of the 1921 and the 1931 censuses. But no attempt has been made to compile such statistics annually by Municipal Boards. In view of the grave congestion and insanitation in the city it seems desirable to undertake a comprehensive survey of housing conditions in Cawnpore. Such a survey is likely to be of great value in determining the policy and line of action that can most usefully be pursued and, besides, help welfare workers and health visitors in their work. Records of rent for different types of workmen's houses should be maintained. The rise and fall of rent is a very important matter intimately connected with the health and comfort of work-people and their families. The rent behaviour, as it were, should be ascertained over a period of years.

244. *Detailed list of subjects under which statistics should be collected:* We give below a detailed list of subjects and heads under which statistical data should be collected and maintained by Government:

### *Principal Heads of Labour Statistics*

#### *I. Wholesale and retail prices*

- (1) Wholesale prices, raw material and manufactured goods: cotton, gur, oilseeds, oils, ghee, tobacco, sugar, coal, hides and skins, leather, iron and steel, yarn, textiles, metals, machinery, building materials, etc.
- (2) Retail prices, consumption of goods: wheat, wheat flour, barley, gram, rice, maize, juwar, bajra, pulses (Urd, Arhar and Mung), sugar, gur, ghee, mustard oil, castor oil, kerosene oil, milk, meat, salt, potatoes, firewood, coal, matches, shirtings (markin), dhotis (Muir) and . . . (illegible).

#### *II. Employment*

- (1) Number of workers employed in factories
  - (a) men,



- (b) women, and
- (c) children.
- (2) Number employed during day and during night.
- (3) Classification of workers by occupation.
- (4) Classification of workers by literacy and technical qualification.
- (5) Unemployed workers of various grades.

### III. *Wages*

- (1) Rates for piece work.
- (2) Average wages of various classes of workers.
  - (a) Time workers.
  - (b) Piece workers.
- (3) Bonuses, allowances, overtime pay, etc.
- (4) Fines and other deductions from wages.
- (5) Average attendance.
- (6) Period and method of payment.

### IV. *Cost of living*

- (1) Heads of expenditure.
- (2) Weights allotted per head.
- (3) Indices of cost per head.
- (4) General Index number of cost of living.

### V. *Sickness and mortality*

- (1) Statistics of sickness:
  - (a) Number of persons treated for principal diseases.
  - (b) Rates per mile of population.
- (2) Statistics of mortality:
  - (a) Number and rate of births, deaths and causes of deaths by sex, age and chaks (Municipal sub-wards).
  - (b) Number and rate of infantile and maternal mortality.

### VI. *Education and welfare*

- (1) Education:
  - (a) Number of institutions and scholars: adults, boys, girls; average number of scholars attending.
  - (b) Source of finance:
    - (i) Private funds.
    - (ii) Municipal grants.
    - (iii) Government aid.
    - (iv) Fees charged.

- ## VII. Housing conditions and rents

- ### VIII. *Hours of labour*

- ## IX. Accidents and compensation

- (1) Number of accidents: fatal, serious and minor.
- (2) Amount of compensation allowed in each.

## X. *Absenteeism*

- (1) Sickness.
- (2) Compulsory leave and playing off.
- (3) Other causes.

## XI. *Condition of work and recruitment*

- (1) Methods of recruitment.
- (2) Number of dismissals and discharges:
  - (a) For rationalisation.
  - (b) For reduction in work.
  - (c) Summary dismissals.
  - (d) Other dismissals or discharges.
  - (e) Resignations.
- (3) Fines.
- (4) Facilities of latrines, drinking water, places of eating, creches, medical aid etc. inside the mills.
- (5) Conditions of leave for maternity, sickness, etc.
- (6) Miscellaneous reports.

## XII. *Trade Unions*

- (1) Names, organisation and strength of registered unions.
- (2) Other unions.
- (3) Subscription rates and funds.

## XIII. *Trade disputes*

- (1) Nature, duration and cause of strikes and lockouts.
- (2) Number of workmen involved.
- (3) Loss in wages, working hours and production.
- (4) Method and terms of settlement.

## XIV. *Statistics of industrial production*

- (1) Number and size of factories of each class.
- (2) Details of production number of quality.
- (3) Wage bill:
  - (a) For workmen.
  - (b) For supervising staff.
  - (c) For clerical staff.
- (4) Profit and Loss Accounts:
  - (a) Capital invested.
  - (b) Gross profits.

The cost of living theory cannot, in our opinion, have valid application to those classes of workers whose wages are below a minimum wage level. We also see a distinct trend in the prices towards a rise. Most important of all, we do not wish to see the workers wedded for all time to a given standard of the past.

250. Regarding bonuses, we urge that all monthly bonuses should be consolidated with wages and all annual ones converted into profit sharing schemes (Para 83).

251. Finally we recommend the establishment of a Wage Fixation Board to function on the lines of the British Trade Boards for the adjustment of wages from time to time (Para 85). This Board may consist only of employers' and workers' representatives with a chairman who might either be one of themselves or an independent outside authority, the Commissioner of Labour for instance.

252. *Minimum wage:* In Chapter III we consider the principle of a basic minimum wage for the textile industry in Cawnpore and lay down that no worker should get a wage of less than Rs.15/- per month of 26 working days (Para 98). This limit will operate really in the case of the unskilled workers who in some mills draw even less than Rs.10/- per month.

253. *Standardisation of wages:* In Chapter IV we deal with the desirability of standardisation of wages and ask the Employers' Association to take up this question (Para 102). Standard designations for various occupations should first be laid down and duties attaching to them defined as precisely as possible (Para 103). It should then be possible to take up the question of the standardisation of wage rates which should provide for automatic adjustments required by variable factors of work (Paras 104 & 105). We are opposed to more standardisation of wages as distinguished from rates as it cannot provide the stimulus which is necessary for a workman to increase his efficiency (Para 106).

254. *Rationalisation:* In Chapter V we state what we understand by 'rationalisation' and describe the extent to which rationalisation has taken place in the Cawnpore textile industry. We advocate the adoption of rationalisation and intensification schemes on condition that the workers' interests are duly safeguarded (Paras 113 & 116). Any attempt at rationalisation should be preceded by the determination of a standard allocation of work for each occupation, so that it may be possible to judge at what point intensification begins (Para 117). Then it will be necessary to lay down principles both as regards conditions preliminary to the introduction of efficiency schemes and the mode of remunerating the extra work involved (Para 118). All these matters should be considered by the Employers' Association in close collaboration with the representatives of labour without whose active help even the soundest rationalisation scheme may fail. The next point that we urge is that the adoption of the various efficiency schemes in a mill should be gradual, so that the resulting unemployment is reduced to a minimum (Para 119). Given an atmosphere of peace and goodwill, we anticipate that the industry will expand and be in a position to re-employ workers discharged in consequence of rationalisation. Where, however, such absorption is not possible, we recommend that the workers, who have put in at least two

years' service, should be paid an unemployment benefit of a fortnight's wages for every year of service (Para 199).

255. *Shift system:* In Chapter VI we examine the various shift systems prevailing in Cawnpore, and condemn the overlapping and multiple systems (Para 130). The majority of the mills have two straight shifts, and we consider that the others should fall into line. For mills which want to work continuously, we suggest the adoption of three eight-hour shifts with due safeguards to prevent the workers' wages falling below a certain level (Para 133).

256. We consider night work to be a necessary evil, but to alleviate its rigours we recommend that day and night shifts should alternate in the case of every worker except, of course, women and children (Para 132).

257. *Recruitment:* Chapter VII deals with the question of recruitment of labour. We find that the existing methods lend themselves greatly to the evils of bribery and corruption and urge the complete dissociation of mistries from recruitment (Para 136). We recommend the establishment of a Labour Exchange under Government control which would provide employment to applicants on demand from factories (Paras 139 & 140). In the matter of recruitment of labour we lay emphasis on the questions of physical fitness, educational qualifications and technical training. No recruitment should, in our opinion, be made without preliminary medical examination and arrangements should be made for a periodical medical examination of all permanent workers (Para 142). We think that some kind of educational test is necessary particularly in the case of child and adolescent labour (Para 143). A part-time course of technical instruction for workers seeking permanency will, we consider, be extremely desirable (Para 144).

258. *Terms of employment:* Next we turn to terms of employment and urge that a uniform set of rules applicable to all mills should be evolved by the Employers' Association (Para 146). It should be made clear in the rules that active membership of a trade union will not stand in the way of a worker either in regard to his recruitment or promotion (Para 146). Another matter on which we lay emphasis is the display of wage rates on the noticeboard by all mills. This should be made obligatory in the rules made by the Government under the Payment of Wages Act (Para 147). We support the proposal that every worker should be given a wage card at the end of each wage period (Para 148).

259. *Objectionable punishments:* In Chapter VIII we condemn the practice of "forced leave" resorted to by practically all the mills as a mode of punishment (Para 150). In a group of mills under one employer we found that three differential rates of payment have been introduced for the same work—one for "good quality", another for "indifferent quality", and a third one for "poor quality". Payment is made at the end of the wage period at one of the three rates at the discretion of the employer. This practice, in our opinion, is a gross violation of the Payment of Wages Act, and should be abandoned at once (Para 152). As regards "playing off" we think that it should be limited to two days at a time and twelve days in a year. If this limit is exceeded, we consider it would be

fair to give the worker 50 per cent of the normal wages for each extra day (Para 151).

260. *Dismissal*: On the thorny question of dismissal we argue that just as the employers' right to fine has been restricted by the Payment of Wages Act, dismissals should be restricted to gross misdemeanour or wilful and serious neglect of duty. In our view, it is of the utmost importance that the workers should be satisfied that the punishment of dismissal when inflicted is justified. A dismissed worker should have the right of having his case taken up by his trade union with the mill concerned. The services of the Labour and Conciliation Officers may be utilised at a later stage, if necessary. If on investigation a dismissal is found to be unjust and the employer cannot be persuaded to reinstate the worker, the Conciliation Officer should have the power to convert it into a discharge and ask the employer to pay compensation either at the rate of fifteen days' wages for every year of service or a lump amount not exceeding six months' wages. He should also have the power to award at his discretion the full or part of the wages for the period subsequent to dismissal (Para 154).

261. *Leave without pay*: In Chapter IX we deal with the question of leave and recommend that a provision should be made for 15 days' 'privilege' leave with full pay for workers with not less than two years' continuous service to their credit. In addition such workers should also be eligible to get 15 days' 'sick' leave on half pay. This should be converted into full pay for those whose period of service extends beyond five years (Para 161). We justify this recommendation on the grounds that it will promote contentment and efficiency in the workers, reduce the evil of absenteeism, and help to build up a permanent labour force without an undue burden on the industry.

262. *Working conditions*: Chapter X deals with the general working conditions. We recommend greater facilities regarding supplies of drinking water (Para 167); better cooling and humidification arrangements (Para 169); provision of resting places (Para 170); and dining sheds (Para 172); and 60 holidays in a year (Para 176). We conclude by pointing out the urgent necessity of increasing the strength of the factory inspectorate by the addition of two whole-time assistant factory inspectors (Para 177).

263. *Labour organisation*: In the next chapter we impress on the employers the desirability of placing no obstacles in the way of a workers' union, and examine in some detail the constitution of the Mazdoor Sabha. We make various recommendations regarding its reorganisation particularly with regard to the method of election (Para 182), representation of various interests (Para 183), composition of the Executive Committee (Para 191), and declaration of strikes (Para 185). Mill Committees should, in our opinion, be given a definite place in the constitution, but should not be empowered to take any independent action (Para 190). In our opinion, contacts should be fostered between employers and workers and not brought about only when there is a dispute to settle.

264. *Housing*: In Chapter XII we discuss the housing problem. We begin by describing the housing accommodation at present available to the factory

workers through various agencies. The first problem is to improve or reconstruct the existing workmen's dwellings which fall below the minimum standard of health and sanitation. For this purpose, the Improvement Trust should be given adequate powers by an amendment of Section 25 of the U.P. Town Improvement Act in the manner they have asked for (Para 209). The second and the more important problem is to construct new dwellings which should be available to workmen on rent. This work should also, in our opinion, be entrusted to the Improvement Trust (Para 210). For this purpose it will be necessary to finance the Trust, to give it the power to collect rents as a tax, and to exempt Trust property meant solely for the use of workers from municipal taxation (Para 212). We recommend that the Government should float a loan of Rupees fifty lakhs and place a sum of Rupees ten lakhs every year for five years at the disposal of the Trust (Para 211). In our opinion, this will not be a losing, if not a profitable, venture, and at the end of five years about 12,000 houses providing accommodation to approximately forty thousand persons will be available.

265. We would prefer facilities for constructing workmen's houses being given to the Improvement Trust rather than to the employers or other private persons, with the provision that there should be some representative of the workers on the Trust (Paras 210 & 213). We say further that the facilities for purchasing houses should be restricted to genuine house-building co-operative societies (Para 212).

266. *Labour welfare:* In Chapter XIII we deal with the various aspects of labour welfare work. We point out what has hitherto been done by the employers and the Government and urge the establishment of a Welfare Council containing the representatives of various institutions interested in this work (Para 231). We lay emphasis on maternity and child welfare work and urge the necessity of a sickness insurance scheme on a contributory basis. We also lay down the framework of a contributory Provident Fund scheme. All workers getting Rs.15/- p.m. or over will contribute half-an-anna per rupee of the wages earned and the employers will add an equal amount. No worker will be entitled to receive the employers' contribution until he has put in at least ten years' service or is discharged earlier for physical disability or as a consequence of rationalisation (Para 236).

267. For the protection of indebted workers, we recommend a measure on the lines of the Central Provinces Protection of Debtors Act, 1937; and the formation of co-operative societies for cheap credit (Para 237).

268. We also advocate the formation of co-operative stores in each mill and the establishment of canteens (Para 238).

269. *Labour Office:* In Chapter XV we urge on the Government the desirability of maintaining and publishing detailed labour and industrial statistics. We recommend the establishment of a regular labour office on the lines of the Bombay Labour Office (Para 240) and append a detailed list of subjects under which statistics should, in our opinion, be collected.

270. *Burden of our proposals on the industry:* Having thus outlined our proposals, we now proceed to assess, as far as practicable, the burden that they are likely to place on the textile industry in Cawnpore.

271. *Cost of wage increment proposal:* It is not possible to say with great accuracy what the financial effect of our wage increment proposal will be. But as pointed out in Para 81 on a rough calculation it will enhance the wage bill by between 10 and 12 per cent. The increments that we have proposed vary from 10 pice in the rupee to 2 pice. The lower the wages the greater the increase and the vast majority of workers get below Rs.30/-, but the wage bill of the better paid workers is comparatively higher. If on an average the increment is assumed at 7 pice in the rupee, the additional cost will be about 11 per cent of the present labour costs.

272. *Cost of the minimum wage proposal:* The burden of our proposal of a basic minimum of Rs. 15/- p.m. will be very light. Those getting Rs. 13/- and over will be covered by the wage increment proposal, and only those getting below Rs. 13/- will be affected by the minimum. The percentage of such workers will not be more than 4, and if their average earning is assumed to be Rs. 12/- they will get an increase of Rs. 3/-. The addition to the wage bill should not therefore exceed  $4 \times 3/12$  or 1%.

273. *Cost of unemployment benefit:* There is no data on which we may calculate the effect of our proposal to give an unemployment benefit to the workers discharged as a result of rationalisation. The number of workers so dismissed will not be very large and in any case it will only be the latest workers who will be discharged. We think it is safe to say that this proposal will not impose an addition of more than 0.4 per cent on the wage bill.

274. As we have shown in Chapter IX, our leave proposals will add to the wage bill between 5 and 6 per cent. Together with the restrictions placed on playing off, the addition may be said to be about 6 per cent.

275. The cost of our Provident Fund scheme should be about 2.5 per cent of the present wage bill. The employers will have to contribute half-an-anna per rupee of the wages earned. This gives an addition of 3.1% to the labour costs but the burden will be somewhat lightened on account of the restriction that only workers with a minimum of ten years' service will be entitled to the employers' contribution.

276. To sum up, as a result of all our proposals, the labour costs will be enhanced by about 21 per cent. As we have pointed out elsewhere, the labour costs in Cawnpore are lower than those in Bombay and Ahmedabad, and if our analysis of the present position of the Cawnpore industry is at all correct, we are confident that this burden will be easy to bear. In addition to this increase in the wage bill, there will be some rise in the cost of production owing to the reduction in the possible number of working days to 305. We cannot assess it exactly, but it should not be appreciable.

277. Before concluding we wish to make it clear that the proposals made by us in this report apply both to the cotton and woollen industries. We did not examine the case of other textile industries and therefore have been unable to frame any specific proposals with regard to them.

NOTE: Appendices mentioned in the Report are not included.



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